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# The Camelot Classics.

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# PROSE WRITINGS OF SWIFT.

H. J. Baker jr.

# PROSE WRITINGS

U. S. Army

OF

# SWIFT.

CHOSEN AND ARRANGED

By WALTER LEWIN.

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

BIOGRAPHERS have long been busy with the career of Swift. The Earl of Orrery's *Remarks* appeared in 1751, six years after Swift's death. Of this work 7500 were sold within a month of publication. Dr. Delany's *Observations* followed in 1754, and Deane Swift's *Essay* and Hawkesworth's *Life* the next year. In 1778 came Dr. Johnson's essay in his series of *Lives of the Poets*, and in 1784 Sheridan the younger issued yet another *Life*. This Sheridan was the son of Swift's intimate friend, Dr. Sheridan, a brother clergyman and sometime Master of Cavan School; but he himself was a boy when Swift died, and had known him only in the period of decay. In 1814 Sir Walter Scott attempted in his *Memoirs* "to condense the information" given by his predecessors "into one distinct and comprehensible narrative," and, touched

with his genius, this modest undertaking resulted in a vivid and life-like portrait of the great Dean. His is by far the most interesting of all the biographies, but it is not invariably accurate. The spirit of historical criticism was not as vigorous in those days as it is now. In our own time Thackeray has treated of Swift in his *English Humourists;* Mr. Leslie Stephen has contributed a volume to the *English Men of Letters* series, and Mr. John Forster commenced a biography, but died when only the first of three volumes was completed. Mr. Craik then undertook the task. His narrative is not so interesting as Scott's, but, though his attitude is, to a certain extent, that of an advocate for Swift against his detractors rather than that of a judge, his book is the most trustworthy that has appeared, and must, henceforth, be recognised as a standard work on the subject.

The career of Swift divides itself, naturally, into three parts; the first terminating with Temple's death in $16\frac{99}{98}$, the second covering the period of his political activity in London, and the last his settlement in Ireland. He was born at No. 7 Hoey's Court, Dublin, on the 30th of November 1667, the second child of Jonathan Swift and Abigail Erick. His father had died in the preceding spring, leaving the young mother in no easy circumstances. When Jonathan was a year old his nurse having to go to Whitehaven to visit a sick friend, could not bear to be parted from the child and took him with her secretly. He remained at Whitehaven for nearly three years, as the perils of the voyage were not inconsiderable in those days,

and his mother feared to expose him to them by bringing him back.

Mrs. Swift and her family were to no small extent dependent on her brother-in-law, Godwin Swift, for their support, and Jonathan owed the best part of his education to the assistance given by this uncle. He was not grateful for it, whether because he felt the undue sensitiveness of a poor relation or because the aid was given ungraciously, cannot now be determined. Godwin Swift was a lawyer in excellent practice, but he ultimately lost his fortune by foolish speculations.

At the age of six Jonathan was sent to the Kilkenny Grammar School, and he remained there until he was fourteen. William Congreve was one of his school-fellows. At fourteen he went to Trinity College, Dublin (24th April 1682). "By the ill-treatment of his nearest relatives," he says, in a fragment of autobiography which he wrote, "he was so discouraged and sunk in his spirits that he too much neglected his academic studies, for some parts of which he had no great relish by nature, and turned himself to reading history and poetry." The consequence was he passed his B.A. degree only with difficulty. Before he reached his Master's degree his uncle failed and the supplies for his education were consequently stopped. This uncle died in 1688, insane.

Mrs. Swift had removed to Leicester, where she resided during the remainder of her life. When war broke out in Ireland, in 1688, Swift came to her. She was not rich, and could not have supported him for long; but it is not to be

supposed he would have allowed her to do so in any case. As it was, he soon found employment with Sir William Temple, a kinsman of hers. The post of clerk or secretary to which he was appointed was not a desirable one; he must have found it difficult to determine whether he was to rank as a menial or as a confidential adviser. "He read to and wrote for his patron; kept the accounts, and made himself useful as a sort of superior valet." However, the connection on these conditions did not last long. In less than a year Swift had to return to Ireland to recover his health. In the fall of 1691 he returned to England, and again settled with Temple in a capacity of greater independence and comfort.

At Temple's house Swift first met King William III., from whom for some time he expected advancement, but in vain. More important to him was his meeting with Esther Johnson (the famous Stella)—then a child of seven years, whose mother was in the service of Sir William and whose reputed father was Sir William himself. Swift was much interested in the child and troubled himself to instruct her. She grew to be a beautiful and accomplished woman, and the centre of the most mysterious as well as the most romantic episode in Swift's career.

At this time, too, with Temple's assistance, Swift secured at Oxford the Master's degree which he had failed, through his removal, to get at Dublin. He left Temple for the second time in May 1694, went to his mother at Leicester and thence to Ireland, where he entered the Church. He was ordained deacon 25th October 1694, and priest three

months later. Immediately after, Lord Capel presented him to the prebend of Kilroot, near Belfast, a living worth £100 a-year.

Here began a small love affair, the lady being Miss Waring, an heiress, known to students of Swift as Varina. It did not amount to much. On the 29th April 1696 he offered her marriage in a letter couched in terms too extravagant to be genuine, or at least, deeply earnest. Varina's answer is lost, but evidently, while not refusing him outright, she left the matter somewhat in suspense; inclining, it would seem, to an assent rather than to a refusal. Some sort of correspondence seems to have continued between them until 1700, when matters reached a climax, and Swift put a peremptory stop to the affair by writing a letter deliberately insolent.

Meanwhile (May 1696) Swift had returned to England on a visit to Temple, which developed into a third settlement. The following year he resigned his living at Kilroot. England always had attractions for him, and now he was beginning to interest himself in the exciting politics of the time. This residence with Temple ended with Temple's death on the 27th of January $16\frac{9}{9}\frac{9}{8}$.

During the time he was with Temple, Swift had been busy with his pen. On the 11th of February $169\frac{2}{1}$ he wrote to the Rev. John Kendall that he had already "writ and burnt and writ again, upon all manner of subjects, more than perhaps any man in England." His first notable literary enterprise dates somewhat later. This was the *Battle of the Books*, written and circulated in 1697, but not

published until 1704. This important work was provoked by a controversy in which Temple had become involved with Bentley and others. The question was the relative merits of ancient and modern authors, a dispute often renewed—and trivial enough at best—in the contest between the champions of science and the champions of literature.

Swift returned to Ireland in the summer following Temple's death, and six months later was appointed to the livings of Laracor, Agher and Rathbeggan in Meath, worth altogether about £200 a-year. He had gone over to Dublin as secretary to Lord Berkeley, and even after his appointment to those livings he continued for a time to reside at the castle. Lady Berkeley had "a pious love of sermons," and used to engage Swift in the not too agreeable task of reading them to her from a ponderous volume of Boyle's Discourses. One day, to lighten his work, he wrote, strictly in the style of Boyle, a *Meditation on a Broomstick,* to which the good Lady Berkeley listened with delight, remarking on the singularity of the subject, but praising the discourse to her visitors. It is brief, and will bear reproduction here :—

"This single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest : it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs ; but now, in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk : it is now, at best, but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air ; it is now handled by every dirty wench,

condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself: at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use, of kindling a fire. When I beheld this I sighed, and said within myself, **Surely man is a Broomstick!** Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk: he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs (all covered with powder), that never grew on his head; but now, should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellences and other men's defaults!

But a Broomstick, perhaps, you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head; and pray what is man, but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth! and yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruption to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before; sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away; his last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till, worn out to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by."

This harmless imposition on Lady Berkeley is only one of several instances of Swift's love of practical joking. Another is the great Partridge hoax. Partridge was an astrologer, or at any rate professed to be, who issued every year a prophetic almanac. At the beginning of the year 1708 it occurred to Swift to issue some predictions of his own, which he did, taking the name of Isaac Bickerstaff for his purpose. The chief point in them was that he prophesied the death of Partridge at a certain hour on a certain day. In due time appeared a letter purporting to be written by some one who saw Partridge die. Of course Partridge was indignant. In the next year's almanac he denounced the supposed impostor; whereupon Isaac Bickerstaff audaciously claimed that his prophecy had been verified by the event, notwithstanding that, as would appear, a body was going about professing to be Partridge. The hoax, at the time, must have been sufficiently amusing to every one but poor Partridge, who took it in very serious earnest. Some persons have supposed that it was perpetrated by Swift in order to expose the imposture of these self-styled astrologers; but there is no reason for supposing that Partridge deserved exposure and punishment more than others, or that, in any case, Swift had any more serious object in view than when he wrote the *Meditation on a Broomstick*, namely, to divert himself.

Lord Berkeley's term of office was completed in April 1701, and Swift accompanied him back to England. Here he soon found himself in the midst of exciting politics, upon the issue of which the very existence of the nation

seemed to depend. The revolution which drove James II. from the throne had not yet got itself firmly established. William III. was at the height of his struggle with Parliament. His seat on the throne was not too secure, and the outlook for his successors was still less satisfactory. He was failing in health, and did, in fact, die in less than a year (8th March 1702). The only son of the Princess (afterwards Queen) Anne was just dead, making the direct line of succession very short indeed. The Stuarts had good hopes of another restoration. The whole struggle was encumbered by the desperate hatred and fear which existed between Catholics and Protestants, and complicated by the personal ambition of the party leaders on both sides. A House of Commons, strongly Tory, had just been elected; and, according to the fashion of those times, was proceeding to extreme measures with the fallen Whig ministers. The Whigs, however, still controlled the Upper House. Swift threw himself at once into the struggle, making common cause with the Whigs, and his pamphlet, *On the Dissentions in Athens and Rome*, appeared. It was the only pamphlet Swift ever wrote on behalf of the Whigs. He was essentially a Churchman, and as such he viewed politics. His hopes in behalf of the Church centred at first in the Whigs, but he came at length to see that nothing could be hoped from them except promises. The Tories were, on the whole, more in accordance with his ideas on ecclesiastical matters.

It took him some years to understand this. The Whigs soon regained power, and kept it until 1710. We find

Swift again in London, from November 1707 until the spring of 1709, busy with politics, hoping, and in some degree working for his own advancement, but, above all, occupied with the affairs of the Church, trying to protect her interests against Dissenters and Roman Catholics, and to secure certain grants. His hopes were still in the Whigs, who were at the height of their power; but in 1709 he finally discovered that his hopes, for himself as well as for the Church, were vain. Accordingly, in disgust, he returned to Ireland, and severed himself from the Whig party, and, for a time, from all public affairs.

On the overthrow of the Whigs in the following year, Swift reappeared in London, on his Church mission. The Whig leaders welcomed him, and now that their power to redeem their promises was gone, were lavish with excuses for their past failure. They would fain have convinced him that they were his friends, and have enlisted his services on their behalf. He responded to their advances very coolly; and on the 4th October was introduced to Harley, the new Lord Treasurer, who received him gladly, for he had already, while among the Whigs, proved that he was more desirable as a friend than as a foe. His permanent adhesion to the Tory party was secured by promptly admitting his claims for "First Fruits." He soon became one of the innermost circle of the party, and thus influenced its policy within, while he aided its cause among the public with his pen.

Macaulay has pointed out the change which has taken place in our day, in the relative influence exercised by political

speakers and writers :—"A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. . . . . The orator, by the help of the short-hand writer, has, to a great extent, superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced." Thus the services of a writer so ready and incisive as Swift were of the highest value to the ministry. *The Examiner*, a weekly series of political essays, was commenced in their interest shortly after their accession to power. Swift soon took it in hand, and continued to write it for some eight months. On the 27th of November 1711 his pamphlet on *The Conduct of the Allies* appeared. A second edition was called for in a few days, and was sold in five hours. By the end of January 11,000 copies had been sold. Much other work of an effective sort he did for Harley's ministry.

Had he been an ambitious and self-seeking man, Swift might have obtained some very high appointments and emoluments in return for these services. That he obtained various favours is undoubted, but they were mostly for his Church and for friends and other persons in whose welfare he was interested. His personal reward came on the 23rd of April 1713, when he was appointed to the not very desirable Deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin; an appointment which, at the outset, involved a payment of £1000 for house and fees. In June he went to Ireland, but was back in London in October, again busy with his pen. Soon

afterwards the Tory ministry fell and his active participation in English politics ceased. Efforts were made to secure his aid in overthrowing the Whigs, but this part of his career was at an end.

Perhaps the most earnest piece of work ever performed by Swift was his exposure of the wrongs of Ireland. He did not love that country, and it was a source of vexation to him that, by accident, so to speak, he was born there. He took unnecessary pains to show that, notwithstanding this circumstance, being of English parents, he was an Englishman and not an Irishman. Ireland was indeed in a deplorable condition. Every form of oppression that the perverted intelligence of English statesmen could devise had been resorted to. The only value that Englishmen placed on Ireland was to extort money from its people to be spent in England. In 1696 an Act was passed prohibiting direct trade from Ireland to the Colonies, and another Act gave the death blow to the Irish woollen industries by practically prohibiting the exportation of manufactures. So that the people were not only ground down by extortion but their very means of earning food were taken from them. The results, of course, were famine and crime. To a man with Swift's sense of justice and compassion all this was horrible. He threw the weight of his influence entirely on the Irish side. In 1720 he wrote a *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures*, in which he urged that "a firm resolution be taken, by male and female, never to appear with one single shred that comes from England." In 1724 followed the famous

*Drapier Letters.* The immediate occasion for them was the grant made by the English Government to one William Wood to issue a copper coinage for Ireland. As a matter of fact, Ireland was in need of some small coinage at the time; but the conditions under which this authority was given were arranged without the slightest reference to the desires or needs of Ireland. They were intended simply to enrich Wood and others, whose profit on the transaction amounted to some £40,000.

The letters were written as from a tradesman of Dublin, who foresaw in this transaction the final ruin of his country. Like most of Swift's political works, they are one-sided and extravagant in statement, aiming at a certain effect, rather than to discover the truth. Swift was essentially a party man and an advocate. In this case he was himself extremely angry, and he appealed to passion rather than to sober reason. Many of his statements will by no means bear critical examination. The true grievance was not so much any mischief the coinage, as such, could do, as in this new exhibition of the utter indifference of the English Government to the welfare of Ireland.

Swift carried his point against the Government, though not without danger to himself. Rewards were offered for the discovery of the writer of the letters; but no action was taken, although the writer was, or easily might have been, known. This disinterested action of his made him the most popular man in the country. Thenceforward, until his death, the common people almost worshipped him. Their faith in him was unbounded. When, on the occasion

of an eclipse, Swift took it into his head to cause the bellman to proclaim that the eclipse had been postponed by order of the Dean, the crowd dispersed at once. On his return from a visit to England, in 1726, he was welcomed like a prince with triumphal processions and bonfires. It was so wonderful to these poor, down-trodden people to find a man in authority taking an honest, human interest in their welfare, instead of robbing them.

As early as 1708 Swift had made the acquaintance of Mrs. Vanhomrigh and her daughter Hester in London. Hester Vanhomrigh was "Vanessa." She appears to have been an accomplished and affectionate woman. Intellectual sympathy brought them into close relations, and a life-long friendship might have been maintained between them, if intellectual friendship had sufficed for Vanessa. As a matter of fact, however, she fell in love with the Dean, and he did not fall in love with her. There does not seem to have been any wish or intention on his part to make her care for him. Indeed, her ardour was exceedingly inconvenient. Instead of putting a stop to the intercourse altogether as he ought to have done, he did what most men, similarly circumstanced, would have done—conceded as much as he could, insisted, in words, on strict friendship, and thus, in trying to be kind, really made matters worse. Keeping her at a distance, he thereby increased rather than diminished the passion he had aroused. Undoubtedly he liked her well enough, but he certainly never was in love with her. There was a woman of very different temperament whom he liked much better, and whom, if any one,

he would have married. He had known Stella when she was a child of seven, and had been her teacher as long as she needed one and her guide and friend in her maturer years. Vanessa was enthusiastic and passionate; Stella was calm and self-contained. That Swift and Stella had the profoundest regard for each other is undoubted. Beyond this, their relations to each other are shrouded in a certain amount of mystery. It was believed for many years after Swift's death that they were privately married, although they never lived together. Mr. Craik, who has considered the evidence carefully, thinks it points to this. Whether this be so or not, it has been generally held that it was by no act of Stella's that they lived apart. The truth may be, however, that neither of them ever desired to break the happy relationship which had existed from the beginning; or that if either of them did wish to change it for that of husband and wife, it was Swift and not Stella. To this latter theory the pathetic legend, "Only a woman's hair," on a lock of Stella's, found in his desk, distinctly points.

The tragedy of Vanessa may be told in a few words. Jealous of Swift's friendship with Stella, she wrote to her asking if she was Swift's wife. The letter fell into Swift's hands. In an ungovernable rage he went to her house, threw the paper on a table before her, and left without speaking a word. An excitable woman, in delicate health, the shock hastened her death, which occurred a few months after (May 1723). She revoked a will which she had made in Swift's favour, and left instructions that some

poems and letters he had written to her, which she thought would compromise him, should be published. The letters did not appear during Swift's lifetime.

Stella died in 1728, aged about forty-seven years. In a touching memoir commenced on the night of her death, Swift described her as "the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with."

Swift had now reached the age of sixty, and he began to take less interest in public movements. One or two measures affecting the Church still attracted his notice. He visited London once more, and had an interview with Walpole, the great Whig leader, but his concern with English politics was a thing of the past. He did not yet cease to interest himself in the condition of Ireland, and the affairs of his Cathedral had his careful attention. Among the literary works of his later years were the *Directions to Servants*, and various verses; and he revised his *History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*, and endeavoured to get it published, but was dissuaded by his friends. For some years he had friendly and even jovial intercourse with Sheridan and others, but Sheridan died in 1738, and the rest, by degrees, had also passed away, leaving him a lonely old man. The year Sheridan died, the mental disorder in which his life was to end became serious, and every year, from that time forward, increased. His memory disappeared, and he became incapable of receiving strangers, and at length lost all means of communication with the world. Death released him on the 19th of October 1745.

"The chief end I purpose to myself in all my labours is to vex the world rather than divert it; and if I could compass that design without hurting my own person or fortune, I would be the most indefatigable writer you have ever seen without reading." Swift wrote thus to Pope on the 29th of September 1725, and he added, "I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities, and all my love is toward individuals." There is more truth in the second of these statements than in the first.

Swift was no lover of men in general, for he saw all their faults and follies and little besides. It never seems to have occurred to him that there was a beautiful side to human nature, or that the manifest evil was only a relative thing—a lesser good or a blundering effort after good. Carlyle, like Swift, exposed the faults and follies of men, but he did not lose sight of their possibilities for better things. He blamed them for their badness because they were capable of goodness. Swift had scarcely enough respect for men even to blame them. Man was to him as an unclean beast, loathsome evermore. "Principally I hate and detest that animal called man," he said. He scorned men for doing wrong, but never spurred them to do right or held up ideals of heroism for their contemplation. While the study of his works is healthy as an occasional mental and moral tonic, it would not be good as daily food.

Swift was a man of facts, not of ideas. His mind was deep, not broad. His sympathies were confined within exceedingly narrow limits. His effort to write history was a conspicuous failure, because, like Macaulay, he could not

weigh and judge impartially. He could see well into a thing, but not over or around it. Consequently, his strong common-sense and his wonderful intellect were compelled to serve the interests of party and not of mankind. He had no high aims.

Yet he had no low aims either. He maintained his integrity in the midst of a dissolute age, and if he did not use his great powers for the noblest causes, he certainly was not guilty of prostituting them. Whatever his limitations and defects might be, he never pretended to be better than he was. He was a hater of shams, and the only sham he himself was ever guilty of was the appearance of being worse than he really was. Those who did not look below the surface saw only a hater of men, a party politician, a self-seeker, a clergyman without religion who cared for his office only for its emoluments, a man, hard, grasping, ill-natured and insolent. Those who did look below the surface found that the real Swift was a very different person. He loved his mother with more than common devotion. He was an unswerving friend. When he had influence with the Government he did far more for persons who were not even his friends than he ever did for himself. So far from being malicious, he could do a good turn even for his enemies, as, witness, the aid he gave Steele after Steele had quarrelled with him. After he had settled in Dublin, his acts of private benevolence were immense. One of his servants, whose drunkenness and inattention he had long submitted to, he dismissed summarily and never forgave, because he insolently refused to attend to the request of a needy old woman. He was almost too susceptible to kindness, for his estimate of individual men was often based on their personal treatment of him and of those belonging to him. The letters

which make up the *Journal to Stella* must have been written by a man of an affectionate and generous disposition.

Swift was not a professional man of letters. He did not write either for profit or from a love of literature. The pen, to him, was an efficient weapon for ulterior ends—political, ecclesiastical, or personal. With few exceptions (such as some of his contributions to the *Tatler*) his style was free from the fashionable graces, or fopperies, of the period. He wrote for publication with simple directness, as if he were writing a letter. His language was that of a man who would, at all times, unblushingly call things by their real names. When he expressed himself coarsely, whether from rage or in jest, he did so openly, and not as if with a snigger and a wink. His writings were almost wholly occasional to meet a need of the hour: to defend or destroy a ministry, to secure a measure, to discredit a policy, or to whip some misbehaviour. Yet, so slowly do we move, that they possess not only historical but much living interest to-day.

The works of Swift contained in the present volume are given as he wrote them, without omission or alteration. In choosing the pieces my aim has been to exhibit the author in his varying moods. No doubt some readers will look, first of all, for *Gulliver's Travels*, and will wonder that they do not find it. It is not printed here because it is already so well-known and so easily obtainable elsewhere. Moreover, it is not Swift's best or most representative work. Great as are its merits, it lacks that constructive unity which is so characteristic of his other leading pieces. It is like a number of distinct pieces strung rather loosely together. The book actually was written at different times,

wtih long intervals between. It ranks below the *Tale of a Tub*, concerning which Swift, re-reading it in his old age, exclaimed, "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that book." If I could, I would gladly have given both; but as, to the necessary limits of space one piece or the other had to be sacrificed, I think I was right to prefer the *Tale of a Tub* to *Gulliver*. In this way I am able to give in addition, not only the *Battle of the Books* and the so-called *Fragment*, but a number of shorter pieces which probably the majority of my readers have never seen before, and some of which are no less interesting and important than Swift's more famous works. They will all repay perusal.

The *Tale of a Tub* appears to have been written about 1696, but it was not published until 1704. Three editions were exhausted during the year; the fourth edition was published in 1705, and the fifth edition, with the "Author's Apology" prefixed, in 1710. The explanation of the title is given in the "Author's Preface." The reader will hardly fail to see that the *Tale* is not an attack on religion, but on abuses and absurdities which have grown up in the name of religion. The tone is that of a man little given to superstition of any kind, and perhaps not possessed of a very large amount of veneration. Swift himself states in his "Apology," that at the time the *Tale* was written, "the author was then young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head. By the assistance of some thinking and conversation he had endeavoured to strip himself of as many real prejudices as he could; I say real ones, because under the notion of prejudices he knew to what dangerous heights some men have proceeded. Thus prepared, he thought the numerous and gross corruptions in religion and learning

might furnish matter for a satire that would be useful and diverting."

The *Battle of the Books* and the *Discourse concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* appeared with the *Tale*. The former, as I have stated already, had been written and circulated while Swift was living with Temple. The *Argument against abolishing Christianity*, which appeared in 1708, is in Swift's best style. The satire is keen and free from all trace of irritation, and accordingly the more effective. Of the *Art of Political Lying*, he wrote to Stella—"Arbuthnot has sent me, from Windsor, a pretty discourse upon lying; and I have ordered the printer to come for it." Swift's remarks are not, however, always to be taken literally. The same subject was treated in No. 15 of *The Examiner*.

*The Examiner* was a weekly sheet established to support the Tory Government of the day. The first number appeared on the 3rd of August 1710. Among the earliest writers were Atterburry, St. John (afterwards Viscount Bolingbroke), and Prior. Swift's first contribution was No. 14, dated the 2nd of November. His second is printed here. He continued to write the paper regularly for about eight months, his last essay being No. 45, dated the 7th of June 1711, and his last contribution, a brief address in No. 46; after which, as he relates, he "let it fall into other hands, who held it up in some manner until Her Majesty's death." Most of these papers, like Swift's other political writings, have of course, as regards their design, lost some of their original interest, but they always have historical value, and they are worthy of attention as specimens of their author's directness and vigour of expression. This and something more is true of the essay which formed No. 15. The force of its moral is not yet spent.

The *Modest Proposal*, the sermon on *Doing Good*, and the *Proposal for giving Badges to Beggars*, are three of the many papers he wrote about the condition of Ireland. The first named is one of the bitterest of his many bitter satires. It is curious to learn that a French writer believed it to be a serious suggestion.

In the remaining papers, which touch upon various human weaknesses, the reader will find something to amuse him and possibly something to instruct him. At any rate he will find faults exposed of which his neighbours are guilty. *The Tatler* was started by Steele on the 12th of April 1709, and continued until the 2nd of January 1711. Swift contributed occasionally. After Steele's periodical had ceased, several *Tatlers* sprang into existence, including one conducted by Harrison. To this Swift contributed the two papers given here. The *Letter to a very Young Lady on her Marriage* "ought to be read," said Lord Orrery, "by all newly-married women, and will be read with pleasure and advantage by the most distinguished and accomplished ladies." It certainly contains some wholesome advice, and exhibits its author in his not uncommon character of friendly adviser and instructor—a character, however, better known to his intimate friends than to the readers of his public works.

WALTER LEWIN.

BEBINGTON, CHESHIRE,
*9th September* 1886.

# A TALE OF A TUB.

## ANALYTICAL TABLE.

*The Author's Apology.*—The tale approved of by a great majority among the men of taste. Some treatises written expressly against it; but not one syllable in its defence. The greatest part of it finished in 1696, eight years before it was published. The author's intention when he began it. No irreligious or immoral opinion can fairly be deduced from the book. The clergy have no reason to dislike it. The author's intention not having met with a candid interpretation, he declined engaging in a task he had proposed to himself, of examining some publications, that were intended against all religion. Unfair to fix a name upon an author who had so industriously concealed himself. The *Letter on Enthusiasm*, ascribed by several to the same author. If the abuses in law or physic had been the subject of this treatise, the learned professors in either faculty would have been more liberal than the clergy. The passages which appear most liable to objection are parodies. The author entirely innocent of any intention of glancing at those tenets of religion, which he has by some prejudiced or ignorant readers been supposed to mean. This particularly the case in the passage about the three wooden machines. An irony runs through the whole book. Not

necessary to take notice of treatises written against it. The usual fate of common answerers to books of merit is to sink into waste paper and oblivion. The case very different when a great genius exposes a foolish piece. Reflections occasioned by Dr. King's *Remarks on the Tale of a Tub;* others, by Mr. Wotton. The manner in which the Tale was first published accounted for. The Fragment not printed in the way the author intended ; being the groundwork of a much larger discourse. The oaths of Peter why introduced. The severest strokes of satire in the treatise are levelled against the custom of employing wit in profaneness or immodesty. Wit the noblest and most useful gift of human nature ; and humour the most agreeable. Those who have no share of either, think the blow weak, because they are themselves insensible.

P.S.—The author of the *Key* wrong in all his conjectures. The whole work entirely by one hand ; the author defying any one to claim three lines in the book.

*The Bookseller's Dedication to Lord Somers.*—How he finds out that lord to be the patron intended by his author. Dedicators ridiculous, who praise their patrons for qualities that do not belong to them.

*The Bookseller to the Reader.*—Tells how long he has had these papers, when they were written, and why he publishes them now.

*The Dedication to Posterity.*—The author, apprehending that time will soon destroy almost all the writings of this age, complains of his malice against modern authors and their productions, in hurrying them so quickly off the scene ; and therefore addresses posterity in favour of his contemporaries : assures him they abound in wit and learning, and books ; and, for instance, mentions Dryden, Tate, D'Urfey, Bentley, and Wotton.

*Preface.*—The occasion and design of this work.

Project for employing the beaux of the nation. Of modern prefaces. Modern wit how delicate. Method for penetrating into an author's thoughts.

Complaints of every writer against the multitude of writers,

like the fat fellows in a crowd. Our author insists on the common privilege of writers ; to be favourably explained when not understood ; and to praise himself in the modern way. This treatise without satire ; and why. Fame sooner gotten by satire than panegyric ; the subject of the latter being narrow, and that of the former infinite. Difference between Athens and England, as to general and particular satire. The author designs a panegyric on the world, and a modest defence of the rabble.

SECTION I. THE INTRODUCTION.— A physico-mythological dissertation on the different sorts of oratorial machines. Of the bar and the bench. The author fond of the number three ; promises a panegyric on it. Of pulpits ; which are the best. Of ladders ; on which the British orators surpass all others. Of the stage itinerant ; the seminary of the two former. A physical reason why those machines are elevated. Of the curious contrivance of modern theatres. These three machines emblematically represent the various sorts of authors.

An apologetical dissertation for the Grub-street writers, against their revolted rivals of Gresham and Will's. Superficial readers cannot easily find out wisdom, which is compared to several pretty things. Commentaries promised on several writings of Grub-street authors ; as Reynard the Fox, Tom Thumb, Dr. Faustus, Whittington and his Cat, the Hind and Panther, Tommy Pots, and the Wise Men of Gotham. The author's pen and person worn out in serving the state. Multiplicity of titles and dedications.

SECTION II. TALE OF A TUB.—Of a Father and his Three Sons. His will, and his legacies to them. Of the young men's carriage at the beginning ; and of the genteel qualifications they acquired in town. Description of a new sect, who adored their creator the tailor. Of their idol and their system. The three brothers follow the mode against their father's will ; and get shoulder-knots by help of distinctions ; gold-lace, by help of tradition ; flame-coloured satin lining, by means of a supposed codicil ; silver fringe, by virtue of critical interpretation ; and embroidery of Indian figures, by laying aside the plain literal meaning. The will at last locked up. Peter got into a lord's

house, and after his death turned out his children, and took in his own brothers in their stead.

SECTION III. A DIGRESSION CONCERNING CRITICS.—Three sorts of critics; the two first sorts now extinct. The true sort of critics' genealogy; office; definition. Antiquity of their race proved from Pausanias, who represents them by asses browsing on vines; and Herodotus, by asses with horns; and by an ass that frightened a Scythian army; and Diodorus, by a poisonous weed; and Ctesias, by serpents that poison with their vomit; and Terence, by name of *Malevoli*. The true critic compared to a tailor, and to a true beggar. Three characteristics of a true modern critic.

SECTION IV. TALE OF A TUB, continued.—Peter assumes grandeur and titles; and, to support them, turns projector. The author's hopes of being translated into foreign languages. Peter's first invention, of *Terri Australis Incognita*. The second of a remedy for Worms. The third, a Whispering-Office. Fourth, an Insurance-Office. Fifth an Universal Pickle. Sixth, a set of Bulls with leaden feet. Lastly, his pardons to malefactors. Peter's brains turned; he plays several tricks, and turns out his brothers' wives. Gives his brothers bread for mutton and for wine. Tells huge lies; of a cow's milk that would fill 3000 churches; of a Sign-post as large as a man-of-war; of a house that travelled 2000 leagues. The brothers steal a copy of the will, break open the cellar door, and are both kicked out of doors by Peter.

SECTION V. A DIGRESSION IN THE MODERN KIND.—Our author expatiates on his great pains to serve the public by instructing, and more by diverting. The Moderns having so far excelled the Ancients, the author gives them a receipt for a complete system of all arts and sciences, in a small pocket volume. Several defects discovered in Homer; and his ignorance in modern invention, etc. Our author's writings fit to supply all defects. He justifies his praising his own writings by modern examples.

SECTION VI. TALE OF A TUB, continued.—The two brothers ejected, agree in a resolution to reform, according to the will.

They take different names, and are found to be of different complexions. How Martin began rudely, but proceeded more cautiously in reforming his coat. Jack, of a different temper, and full of zeal, begins tearing all to pieces. He endeavours to kindle up Martin to the same pitch, but, not succeeding, they separate. Jack runs mad, gets many names, and founds the sect of Æolists.

SECTION VII. A DIGRESSION IN PRAISE OF DIGRESSIONS.—Digressions suited to modern palates. A proof of depraved appetites; but necessary for modern writers. Two ways now in use to be book-learned: 1. By learning titles; 2. By reading Indexes. Advantages of this last; and of Abstracts. The number of writers increasing above the quantity of matter, this method becomes necessary and useful. The Reader empowered to transplant this Digression.

SECTION VIII. TALE OF A TUB, continued.—System of the Æolists; they hold wind or spirit to be the origin of all things, and to bear a great part in their composition. Of the fourth and fifth animas attributed by them to man. Of their belching, or preaching. Their inspiration from *Εκστία*. They use barrels for pulpits. Female officers used for inspiration; and why. The notion opposite to that of a deity, fittest to form a devil. Two devils dreaded by the Æolists. Their relation with a Northern nation. The Author's respect for this sect.

SECTION IX. DISSERTATION ON MADNESS.—Great conquerors of empires, and founders of sects in philosophy and religion, have generally been persons whose reason was disturbed. A small vapour, mounting to the brain, may occasion great revolutions. Examples; of Henry IV., who made great preparations for war, because of his mistress's absence; and of Louis XIV., whose great actions concluded in a fistula. Extravagant notions of several great philosophers, how nice to distinguish from madness. Mr. Wotton's fatal mistake in misapplying his peculiar talents. Madness the source of conquests and systems. Advantages of fiction and delusion over truth and reality. The outside of things better than the inside. Madness, how useful. A proposal for visiting

Bedlam, and employing the divers members in a way useful to the public.

SECTION X. THE AUTHOR'S COMPLIMENTS TO THE READERS.—Great civilities practised between the authors and readers; and our author's thanks to the whole nation. How well satisfied authors and booksellers are. To what occasions we owe most of the present writings. Of a paltry scribbler our author is afraid of, and therefore desires Dr. Bentley's protection. He gives here his whole store at one meal. Usefulness of this treatise to different sorts of readers; the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned. Proposal for making some ample commentaries on this work; and of the usefulness of commentaries for dark writers. Useful hints for the commentators of this treatise.

SECTION XI. THE TALE OF A TUB, continued.—The author, not in haste to be at home, shows the difference between a traveller weary, or in haste, and another in good plight, that takes his pleasure and views every pleasant scene in his way. The sequel of Jack's adventures; his superstitious veneration for the Holy Scripture, and the uses he made of it. His flaming zeal, and blind submission to the Decrees. His harangue for Predestination. He covers roguish tricks with a show of devotion. Affects singularity in manners and speech. His aversion to music and painting. His discourses provoke sleep. His groaning and affecting to suffer for the good cause. The great antipathy of Peter and Jack made them both run into extremes, where they often met.

The degenerate ears of this age cannot afford a sufficient handle to hold men by. The senses and passions afford many handles. Curiosity is that by which our author has held his readers so long. The rest of this story lost, etc.

THE CONCLUSION.—Of the proper seasons for publishing books. Of profound writers. Of the ghost of wit. Sleep and the Muses nearly related. Apology for the author's fits of dulness. Method and Reason the lacqueys of Invention. Our author's great collection of flowers of little use till now.

## A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE MECHANICAL OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.

The Author, at a loss what title to give this piece, finds after much pains, that of *A letter to a Friend* to be the most in vogue, of modern excuses for haste and negligence, etc.

SECTION I. Mahomet's fancy of being carried to heaven by an ass, followed by many Christians. A great affinity between this creature and man. That talent of bringing his rider to heaven, the subject of this discourse ; but for ass and rider, the author uses the synonymous terms of enlightened teacher and fanatic hearer. A tincture of enthusiasm runs through all men and all sciences ; but prevails most in religion. Enthusiasm defined and distinguished. That which is mechanical and artificial is treated of by our author. Though art oftentimes changes into nature : examples in the Scythian Longheads and English Roundheads.—Sense and reason must be laid aside to let this spirit operate. The objections about the manner of the Spirit from above descending upon the Apostles, make not against this spirit that arises within. The methods by which the assembly helps to work up this spirit, jointly with the preacher.

SECTION II. How some worship a good Being, others an evil. Most people confound the bounds of good and evil. Vain mortals think the Divinity interested in their meanest actions. The scheme of spiritual mechanism left out. Of the usefulness of quilted night-caps to keep in the heat, to give motion and vigour to the little animals that compose the brain. Sound of far greater use then sense in the operations of the Spirit, as in music. Inward light consists of theological monosyllables and mysterious texts. Of the great force of one vowel in canting ; and of blowing the nose, hawking, spitting, and belching. The author to publish an Essay on the Art of Canting. Of speaking through the nose, or snuffling : its origin from a disease occasioned by a conflict between the Flesh and

the Spirit. Inspired vessels, like lanterns, have a sorry, sooty outside. Fanaticism deduced from the ancients, in their orgies, bacchanals, etc. Of the great lasciviousness on those occasions. The Fanatics of the first centuries and those of later times generally agree in the same principle of improving spiritual into carnal ejaculations, etc.

## THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS.

The Preface informs us this piece was written in 1697, on account of a famous dispute about Ancient and Modern Learning, between Sir William Temple and the Earl of Orrery on the one side, and Mr. Wotton and Bentley on the other.

War and invasions generally proceed from the attacks of Want and Poverty upon Plenty and Riches. The Moderns quarrel with the Ancients about the possession of the highest top of Parnassus, and desire them to surrender it or to let it be levelled. The answer of the Ancients not accepted. A war ensues, in which rivulets of ink are spilt; and both parties hang out their trophies—books of controversy. These books haunted with disorderly spirits, though often bound to the peace in libraries. The author's advice in this case neglected, which occasions a terrible fight in St. James's Library. Dr. Bentley, the library-keeper, a great enemy to the Ancients. The Moderns, finding themselves 50,000 strong, gave the Ancients ill language. Temple, a favourite of the Ancients. An incident of a quarrel between a bee and a spider, with their arguments on both sides. Æsop applies them to the present dispute. The order of battle of the Moderns, and names of their leaders. The leaders of the Ancients. Jupiter calls a council of the Gods, and consults the books of Fate; and then sends his orders below. Momus brings the news to Criticism; whose habitation and company is described. She arrives, and sheds her influence on her son Wotton. The battle described. Paracelsus engages Galen; Aristotle aims at Bacon, and kills Descartes; Homer

overthrows Gondibert, kills Denham and Wesley,* Perrault and Fontenelle. Encounter of Virgil and Dryden; of Lucan and Blackmore; of Creech and Horace; of Pindar and Cowley. The episode of Bentley and Wotton. Bentley's armour. His speech to the modern generals. Scaliger's answer. Bentley and Wotton march together. Bentley attacks Phalaris and Æsop. Wotton attacks Temple in vain. Boyle pursues Wotton; and meeting Bentley in his way, he pursues and kills them both.

* Samuel Wesley, rector of Ormesby and Epworth, in Lincolnshire; died 1735.

# THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY.

If good and ill nature equally operated upon mankind, I might have saved myself the trouble of this apology ; for it is manifest by the reception the following discourse has met with, that those who approve it are a great majority among the men of taste ; yet there have been two or three treatises written expressly against it, beside many others that have flirted at it occasionally, without one syllable having been ever published in its defence, or even quotation to its advantage that I can remember, except by the polite author of a late discourse between a Deist and a Socinian.

Therefore, since the book seems calculated to live, at least as long as our language and our taste admit no great alterations, I am content to convey some apology along with it.

The greatest part of that book was finished about thirteen years since, 1696, which is eight years before it was published. The author was then young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head. By the assistance of some thinking, and much conversation, he had endeavoured to strip himself of as many real prejudices as he could ; I say real ones, because under the notion of prejudices, he knew to what dangerous heights some men have proceeded. Thus prepared, he thought the numerous and gross corruptions in religion and learning might furnish matter for a satire that would be useful and diverting. He resolved to proceed in a manner that should be altogether new, the world having been already too long nauseated with endless repetitions upon every subject. The abuses in religion, he proposed to set forth in the allegory of the coats and the three brothers, which was to make up the body of the discourse : those in learning he chose to introduce by way of digressions. He was then a young gentleman much

in the world, and wrote to the taste of those who were like himself; therefore, in order to allure them, he gave a liberty to his pen which might not suit with maturer years or graver characters, and which he could have easily corrected with a very few blots, had he been master of his papers for a year or two before their publication.

Not that he would have governed his judgment by the ill-placed cavils of the sour, the envious, the stupid, and the tasteless, which he mentions with disdain. He acknowledges there are several youthful sallies, which from the grave and the wise may deserve a rebuke. But he desires to be answerable no further than he is guilty, and that his faults may not be multiplied by the ignorant, the unnatural, and uncharitable applications of those who have neither candour to suppose good meanings, nor palate to distinguish true ones. After which, he will forfeit his life if any one opinion can be fairly deduced from that book which is contrary to religion or morality.

Why should any clergyman of our church be angry to see the follies of fanaticism and superstition exposed, though in the most ridiculous manner; since that is perhaps the most probable way to cure them, or at least to hinder them from further spreading? Besides, though it was not intended for their perusal, it rallies nothing but what they preach against. It contains nothing to provoke them, by the least scurrility upon their persons or their functions. It celebrates the Church of England, as the most perfect of all others in discipline and doctrine; it advances no opinion they reject, nor condemns any they receive. If the clergy's resentment lay upon their hands, in my humble opinion they might have found more proper objects to employ them on; *nondum tibi defuit hostis:* I mean those heavy, illiterate scribblers, prostitute in their reputations, vicious in their lives, and ruined in their fortunes, who, to the shame of good sense as well as piety, are greedily read, merely upon the strength of bold, false, impious assertions, mixed with unmannerly reflections upon the priesthood, and openly intended against all religion: in short, full of such principles as are kindly received, because they are levelled to remove those

terrors that religion tells men will be the consequence of immoral lives. Nothing like which is to be met with in this discourse, though some of them are pleased so freely to censure it. And I wish there were no other instance of what I have too frequently observed, that many of that reverend body are not always very nice in distinguishing between their enemies and their friends.

Had the author's intentions met with a more candid interpretation from some, whom out of respect he forbears to name, he might have been encouraged to an examination of books written by some of those authors above described, whose errors, ignorance, dulness and villainy, he thinks he could have detected and exposed in such a manner, that the persons who are most conceived to be affected by them would soon lay them aside and be ashamed; but he has now given over those thoughts, since the weightiest men in the weightiest stations are pleased to think it a more dangerous point to laugh at those corruptions in religion, which they themselves must disapprove, than to endeavour pulling up those very foundations wherein all Christians have agreed.

He thinks it no fair proceeding, that any person should offer determinately to fix a name upon the author of this discourse, who hath all along concealed himself from most of his nearest friends: yet several have gone a step farther, and pronounced another book to have been the work of the same hand with this, which the author directly affirms to be a thorough mistake; he having as yet never so much as read that discourse: a plain instance how little truth there often is in general surmises, or in conjectures drawn from a similitude of style or way of thinking.

Had the author written a book to expose the abuses in law or in physic, he believes the learned professors in either faculty would have been so far from resenting it as to have given him thanks for his pains; especially if he had made an honourable reservation for the true practice of either science: but religion, they tell us, ought not to be ridiculed, and they tell us truth: yet surely the corruptions in it may;

for we are taught by the tritest maxim in the world, that Religion being the best of things, its corruptions are likely to be the worst.

There is one thing which the judicious reader cannot but have observed, that some of those passages in this discourse which appear most liable to objection, are what they call parodies, where the author personates the style and manner of other writers, whom he has a mind to expose. I shall produce one instance of a passage in which Dryden, L'Estrange, and some others I shall not name, are levelled at, who, having spent their lives in faction and apostacies, and all manner of vice, pretend to be sufferers for loyalty and religion. So Dryden tells us, in one of his prefaces, of *his merits and sufferings*, and thanks God that he *possesses his soul in patience;* in other places he talks at the same rate; and L'Estrange often uses the like style; and I believe the reader may find more persons to give that passage an application: but this is enough to direct those who may have overlooked the author's intention.

There are three or four other passages which prejudiced or ignorant readers have drawn by great force to hint at ill meanings; as if they glanced at some tenets in religion. In answer to all which, the author solemnly protests he is entirely innocent; and never had it once in his thoughts, that anything he said, would in the least be capable of such interpretations, which he will engage to deduce full as fairly from the most innocent book in the world. And it will be obvious to every reader, that this was not any part of his scheme or design, the abuses he notes being such as all church-of-England men agree in; nor was it proper for his subject to meddle with other points, than such as have been perpetually controverted since the Reformation.

To instance only in that passage about the three wooden machines mentioned in the introduction; in the original manuscript there was a description of a fourth, which those who had the papers in their power, blotted out, as having something in it of satire, that I suppose they thought was

too particular; and therefore they were forced to change it to the number three, whence some have endeavoured to squeeze out a dangerous meaning, that was never thought on. And, indeed, the conceit was half spoiled by changing the numbers; that of four being much more cabalistic, and, therefore, better exposing the pretended virtue of numbers, a superstition there intended to be ridiculed.

Another thing to be observed is, that there generally runs an irony through the thread of the whole book, which the man of taste will observe and distinguish; and which will render some objections that have been made very weak and insignificant.

This Apology being chiefly intended for the satisfaction of future readers, it may be thought unnecessary to take any notice of such treatises as have been written against the ensuing discourse, which are already sunk into waste paper and oblivion, after the usual fate of common answerers to books which are allowed to have any merit: they are indeed like annuals, that grow about a young tree, and seem to vie with it for a summer, but fall and die with the leaves in autumn, and are never heard of more. When Dr. Eachard wrote his book about the contempt of the clergy, numbers of these answerers immediately started up, whose memory, if he had not kept alive by his replies, it would now be utterly unknown that he was ever answered at all. There is indeed an exception, when any great genius thinks it worth his while to expose a foolish piece; so we still read Marvell's answer to Parker* with pleasure, though the book it answers be sunk long ago: so the Earl of Orrery's remarks will be read with delight, when the dissertation he exposes will neither be sought nor found:† but these are no enterprises for common hands, nor to be hoped for above once or twice in an age. Men would be more cautious of losing their time in such an undertaking, if they did but consider that to answer a book effectually

* Afterwards Bishop of Oxford.

† Boyle's Remarks upon Bentley's *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris.*

requires more pains and skill, more wit, learning, and judgment, than were employed in the writing of it. And the author assures those gentlemen who have given themselves that trouble with him, that his discourse is the product of the study, the observation, and the invention of several years; that he often blotted out much more than he left, and if his papers had not been a long time out of his possession, they must have still undergone more severe corrections: and do they think such a building is to be battered with dirt-pellets, however envenomed the mouths may be that discharge them? He has seen the productions but of two answerers, one of which at first appeared as from an unknown hand, but since avowed by a person* who, upon some occasions, has discovered no ill vein of humour. It is a pity any occasion should put him under a necessity of being so hasty in his productions, which, otherwise, might be entertaining. But there were other reasons obvious enough for his miscarriage in this; he wrote against the conviction of his talent, and entered upon one of the wrongest attempts in nature to turn into ridicule, by a week's labour, a work which had cost so much time and met with so much success in ridiculing others: the manner how he handled his subject I have now forgot, having just looked it over, when it first came out, as others did, merely for the sake of the title.

The other answer is from a person of a graver character, and is made up of half invective, and half annotation,† in the latter of which he has generally succeeded well enough. And the project at that time was not amiss to draw in readers to his pamphlet, several having appeared desirous that there might be some explication of the more difficult passages. Neither can he be altogether blamed for offering at the invective part, because it is agreed on all hands, that the author had given him sufficient provocation. The great objection is against his manner of treating it, very unsuitable to one of his function. It

* Dr. William King, author of *An Account of Denmark*, etc.

† Wotten's *Defence of his Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*.

was determined by a fair majority that this answerer had, in a way not to be pardoned, drawn his pen against a certain great man then alive, and universally reverenced for every good quality that could possibly enter into the composition of the most accomplished person; it was observed how he was pleased, and affected to have that noble writer called his adversary; and it was a point of satire well directed; for I have been told Sir William Temple was sufficiently mortified at the term. All the men of wit and politeness were immediately up in arms through indignation, which prevailed over their contempt, by the consequences they apprehended from such an example; and it grew Porsenna's case *idem trecenti juravimus*. In short, things were ripe for a general insurrection, till my Lord Orrery had a little laid the spirit, and settled the ferment. But his lordship being principally engaged with another antagonist,* it was thought necessary, in order to quiet the minds of men, that this opposer should receive a reprimand, which partly occasioned that discourse of the Battle of the Books; and the author was further at the pains to insert one or two remarks on him in the body of the book.

This answerer has been pleased to find fault with about a dozen passages, which the author will not be at the trouble of defending, further than by assuring the reader, that for the greater part, the reflector is entirely mistaken, and forces interpretations which never once entered into the writer's head, nor will (he is sure) into that of any reader of taste and candour; he allows two or three at most, there produced, to have been delivered unwarily; for which he desires to plead the excuse offered already, of his youth, and frankness of speech, and his papers being out of his power at the time they were published.

But this answerer insists, and says, what he chiefly dislikes, is the design: what that was, I have already told, and I believe there is not a person in England who can understand that book, that ever imagined it to be anything else, but to expose the abuses and corruptions in learning and religion.

* Bentley, concerning Phalaris and Æsop.—*Hawkesworth.*

But it would be good to know what design this reflector was serving, when he concludes his pamphlet with a caution to the reader to beware of thinking the author's wit was entirely his own: surely this must have had some allay of personal animosity at least, mixed with the design of serving the public, by so useful a discovery; and it indeed touches the author in a tender point; who insists upon it, that through the whole book he has not borrowed one single hint from any writer in the world; and he thought of all criticisms, that would never have been one. He conceived, it was never disputed to be an original, whatever faults it might have. However, this answerer produces three instances to prove this author's wit is not his own in many places. The first is, that the names of Peter, Martin, and Jack, are borrowed from a letter of the late Duke of Buckingham. Whatever wit is contained in those three names, the author is content to give it up, and desires his readers will subtract as much as they placed upon that account; at the same time protesting solemnly, that he never once heard of that letter, except in this passage of the answerer: so that the names were not borrowed, as he affirms, though they should happen to be the same; which, however, is odd enough, and what he hardly believes: that of Jack being not quite so obvious as the other two. The second instance to show the author's wit is not his own is Peter's banter (as he calls it in his Alsatia phrase) upon transubstantiation, which is taken from the same duke's conference with an Irish priest, where a cork is turned into a horse. This the author confesses to have seen about ten years after his book was written, and a year or two after it was published. Nay the answerer overthrows this himself; for he allows the Tale was written in 1697; and I think that pamphlet was not printed in many years after. It was necessary that corruption should have some allegory as well as the rest; and the author invented the properest he could, without inquiring what other people had written; and the commonest reader will find, there is not the least resemblance between the two stories.—The third instance is in these words: "I have been assured, that the battle in St. James's Library is *mutatis mutandis*, taken out of a French book

entitled, *Combat des Livres*, if I mis-remember not." In which passage there are two clauses observable; "I have been assured;" and, "if I mis-remember not." I desire first to know whether, if that conjecture proves an utter falsehood, those two clauses will be a sufficient excuse for this worthy critic? The matter is a trifle; but, would he venture to pronounce at this rate upon one of greater moment? I know nothing more contemptible in a writer than the character of a plagiary, which he here fixes at a venture; and this not for a passage, but a whole discourse, taken out from another book, only *mutatis mutandis*. The author is as much in the dark about this as the answerer; and will imitate him by an affirmation at random; that if there be a word of truth in this reflection, he is a paltry, imitating pendant; and the answerer is a person of wit, manners, and truth. He takes his boldness, from never having seen any such treatise in his life, nor heard of it before; and he is sure it is impossible for two writers, of different times and countries, to agree in their thoughts after such a manner, that two continued discourses shall be the same, only *mutatis mutandis*. Neither will he insist upon the mistake in the title; but let the answerer and his friend produce any book they please, he defies them to show one single particular where the judicious reader will affirm he has been obliged for the smallest hint; giving only allowance for the accidental encountering of a single thought, which he knows may sometimes happen; though he has never yet found it in that discourse, nor has heard it objected by anybody else.

So that if ever any design was unfortunately executed it must be that of this answerer, who, when he would have it observed that the author's wit is none of his own, is able to produce but three instances—two of them mere trifles, and all three manifestly false. If this be the way these gentlemen deal with the world in those criticisms, where we have not leisure to defeat them, their readers had need be cautious how they rely upon their credit; and whether this proceeding can be reconciled to humanity or truth, let those who think it worth their while determine.

It is agreed this answerer would have succeeded much better if he had stuck wholly to his business as a commentator upon the TALE OF A TUB, wherein it cannot be denied that he hath been of some service to the public, and hath given very fair conjectures towards clearing up some difficult passages ; but it is the frequent error of those men (otherwise very commendable for their labours), to make excursions beyond their talent and their office by pretending to point out the beauties and the faults, which is no part of their trade—which they always fail in —which the world never expected from them, nor gave them any thanks for endeavouring at. The part of Minellius, or Farnaby,* would have fallen in with his genius, and might have been serviceable to many readers, who cannot enter into the abstruser parts of that discourse ; but *optat ephippia bos piger ;* the dull, unwieldly, ill-shaped ox, would needs put on the furniture of a horse, not considering he was born to labour, to plough the ground for the sake of superior beings, and that he has neither the shape, mettle, nor speed, of the noble animal he would affect to personate.

It is another pattern of this answerer's fair dealing to give us hints that the author is dead, and yet to lay the suspicion upon somebody, I know not who, in the country ; to which can only be returned, that he is absolutely mistaken in all his conjectures ; and surely conjectures are, at best, too light a pretence to allow a man to assign a name in public. He condemns a book, and consequently the author, of whom he is utterly ignorant ; yet at the same time he fixes in print what he thinks a disadvantageous character upon those who never deserved it. A man who receives a buffet in the dark may be allowed to be vexed ; but it is an odd kind of revenge to go to cuffs in broad day with the first he meets and lay the last night's injury at his door. And thus much for the discreet, candid, pious, and ingenious answerer.

How the author came to be without his papers is a story not

* Low commentators, who wrote notes upon classic authors for the use of schoolboys.—*Hawkesworth.*

proper to be told, and of very little use, being a private fact; of which the reader would believe as little, or as much, as he thought good. He had, however, a blotted copy by him, which he intended to have written over with many alterations; and this the publishers were well aware of, having put it into the bookseller's preface that they apprehended a surreptitious copy, which was to be altered, etc. This, though not regarded by readers, was a real truth, only the surreptitious copy was rather that which was printed; and they made all the haste they could, which, indeed, was needless, the author not being at all prepared; but he has been told the bookseller was in much pain, having given a good sum of money for the copy.

In the author's original copy there were not so many chasms as appear in the book, and why some of them were left he knows not. Had the publication been trusted to him, he would have made several corrections of passages, against which nothing has been ever objected: he would likewise have altered a few of those that seem with any reason to be excepted against; but, to deal freely, the greatest number he should have left untouched, as never suspecting it possible any wrong interpretations could be made of them.

The author observes, at the end of the book, there is a discourse called a *Fragment*, which he more wondered to see in print than all the rest, having been a most imperfect sketch, with the addition of a few loose hints, which he once lent a gentleman who had designed a discourse on somewhat the same subject; he never thought of it afterwards, and it was a sufficient surprise to see it pieced up together wholly out of the method and scheme he had intended, for it was the groundwork of a much larger discourse, and he was sorry to observe the materials so foolishly employed.

There is one further objection made by those who have answered this book, as well as by some others, that Peter is frequently made to repeat oaths and curses. Every reader observes, it was necessary to know that Peter did swear and curse. The oaths are not printed out, but only supposed: and the idea of an oath is not immoral, like the idea of a profane or

immodest speech. A man may laugh at the Popish folly of cursing people to hell, and imagine them swearing, without any crime; but lewd words, or dangerous opinions, though printed by halves, fill the reader's mind with ill ideas; and of these the author cannot be accused. For the judicious reader will find that the severest strokes of satire in his book are levelled against the modern custom of employing wit upon those topics; of which there is a remarkable instance in the 112th and 113th pages, as well as in several others, though perhaps once or twice expressed in too free a manner, excusable only for the reasons already alleged. Some overtures have been made by a third hand to the bookseller for the author's altering those pages which he thought might require it; but it seems the bookseller will not hear of any such thing, being apprehensive it might spoil the sale of the book.

The author cannot conclude this apology without making this one reflection: that, as wit is the noblest and most useful gift of human nature, so humour is the most agreeable; and where these two enter far into the composition of any work, they will render it always acceptable to the world. Now, the great part of those who have no share or taste of either, but by their pride, pedantry, and ill manners, lay themselves bare to the lashes of both, think the blow is weak, because they are insensible; and, where wit has any mixture of raillery, it is but calling it banter, and the work is done. This polite word of theirs was first borrowed from the bullies in Whitefriars, then fell among the footmen, and at last retired to the pedants; by whom it is applied as properly to the production of wit as if I should apply it to Sir Isaac Newton's mathematics. But, if this bantering, as they call it, be so despisable a thing, whence comes it to pass they have such a perpetual itch toward it themselves? To instance only in the answerer already mentioned: it is grievous to see him, in some of his writings, at every turn going out of his way to be waggish to tell us of a cow that pricked up her tail; and in his answer to this discourse, he says, it is all a farce and a ladle; with other passages equally shining. One may say of these *impedimenta literarum*, that wit owes them a shame; and

they cannot take wiser counsel than to keep out of harm's way, or, at least, not to come till they are sure they are called.

To conclude: with those allowances above required this book should be read; after which, the author conceives few things will remain which may not be excused in a young writer. He wrote only to the men of wit and taste; and he thinks he is not mistaken in his accounts when he says they have been all of his side enough to give him the vanity of telling his name; wherein the world, with all its wise conjectures, is yet very much in the dark; which circumstance is no disagreeable amusement either to the public or himself.

The author is informed that the bookseller has prevailed on several gentlemen to write some explanatory notes, for the goodness of which he is not to answer, having never seen any of them, nor intending it, till they appear in print; when it is not unlikely he may have the pleasure to find twenty meanings which never entered into his imagination.

*June* 3, 1709.

POSTSCRIPT.—Since the writing of this, which was about a year ago, a prostitute bookseller has published a foolish paper, under the name of *Notes on the Tale of a Tub*, with some account of the author: and, with an insolence which I suppose is punishable by law, has presumed to assign certain names. It will be enough for the author to assure the world, that the writer of that paper is utterly wrong in all his conjectures upon that affair. The author further asserts that the whole work is entirely of one hand, which every reader of judgment will easily discover; the gentleman who gave the copy to the bookseller, being a friend of the author, and using no other liberties besides that of expunging certain passages, where now the chasms appear under the name of *desiderata*. But, if any person will prove his claim to three lines in the whole book, let him step forth and tell his name and titles; upon which, the bookseller shall have orders to prefix them to the next edition, and the claimant shall from henceforward be acknowledged the undisputed author.

*Treatises written by the same author, most of them mentioned in the following Discourses; which will be speedily published.*

A Character of the present Set of Wits in this Island.

A panegyrical Essay upon the Number Three.

A Dissertation upon the principal Productions of Grub-street.

Lectures upon a Dissection of Human Nature.

A Panegyric upon the World.

An analytical Discourse upon Zeal, *histori-theophysiologically* considered.

A general History of Ears.

A modest Defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all ages.

A Description of the Kingdom of Absurdities.

A Voyage into England, by a Person of Quality in *terra australis incognita*, translated from the Original.

A critical Essay upon the Art of Canting philosophically, physically, and musically considered.

# THE BOOKSELLER'S DEDICATION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN LORD SOMERS.

My Lord,—Although the author has written a large dedication, yet that being addressed to a prince, whom I am never likely to have the honour of being known to; a person besides, as far as I can observe, not at all regarded, or thought on by any of our present writers; and being wholly free from that slavery which booksellers usually lie under, to the caprice of authors, I think it a wise piece of presumption to inscribe these papers to your lordship and to implore your lordship's protection of them. God and your lordship know their faults and their merits; for, as to my own particular, I am altogether a stranger to the matter; and though everybody else should be equally ignorant, I do not fear the sale of the book, at all the worse, upon that score. Your lordship's name on the front in capital letters will at any time get off one edition: neither would I desire any other help to grow an alderman, than a patent for the sole privilege of dedicating to your lordship.

I should now, in right of a dedicator, give your lordship a list of your own virtues, and at the same time, be very unwilling to offend your modesty; but chiefly, I should celebrate your liberality towards men of great parts and small fortunes, and give you broad hints that I mean myself. And I was just going on, in the usual method, to peruse a hundred or two of dedications, and transcribe an abstract to be applied to your lordship; but I was diverted by a certain accident: for upon the covers of these papers I casually observed written in large letters the two following words, DETUR DIGNISSIMO; which, for aught I knew, might contain some important meaning. But it unluckily fell out, that none of the authors I employ

understood Latin ; (though I have them often in pay to translate out of that language) ; I was therefore compelled to have recourse to the curate of our parish, who englished it thus, "Let it be given to the worthiest :" and his comment was, that the author meant his work should be dedicated to the sublimest genius of the age for wit, learning, judgment, eloquence, and wisdom. I called at a poet's chamber (who works for my shop) in an alley hard by, showed him the translation, and desired his opinion who it was that the author could mean : he told me, after some consideration, that vanity was a thing he abhorred ; but by the description, he thought himself to be the person aimed at ; and at the same time, he very kindly offered his own assistance gratis towards penning a dedication to himself. I desired him, however, to give a second guess ; Why then, said he, it must be I, or my Lord Somers. From thence I went to several other wits of my acquaintance, with no small hazard and weariness to my person, from a prodigious number of dark, winding stairs ; but found them all in the same story, both of your lordship and themselves. Now, your lordship is to understand, that this proceeding was not of my own invention ; for I have somewhere heard it as a maxim, that those to whom everybody allows the second place, have an undoubted title to the first.

This infallibly convinced me that your lordship was the person intended by the author. But being very unacquainted in the style and form of dedications, I employed those wits aforesaid to furnish me with hints and materials, towards a panegyric upon your lordship's virtues.

In two days they brought me ten sheets of paper, filled up on every side. They swore to me, that they had ransacked whatever could be found in the characters of Socrates, Aristides, Epaminondas, Cato, Tully, Atticus, and other hard names, which I cannot now recollect. However, I have reason to believe, they imposed upon my ignorance ; because, when I came to read over their collections, there was not a syllable there but what I and everybody else knew as well as themselves ; therefore I grievously suspect a cheat ; and that these authors

of mine stole and transcribed every word, from the universal report of mankind. So that I look upon myself as fifty shillings out of pocket, to no manner of purpose.

If by altering the title I could make the same materials serve for another dedication (as my betters have done), it would help to make up my loss; but I have made several persons dip here and there in those papers, and before they read three lines, they have all assured me plainly, that they cannot possibly be applied to any person besides your lordship.

I expected, indeed, to have heard of your lordship's bravery at the head of an army; of your undaunted courage in mounting a breach, or scaling a wall; or to have had your pedigree traced in a lineal descent from the house of *Austria;* or, of your wonderful talent at dress and dancing; or, your profound knowledge in *algebra*, *metapyhsics*, and the *oriental* tongues. But to ply the world with an old beaten story of your wit, and eloquence, and learning, and wisdom, and justice, and politeness, and candour, and evenness of temper in all scenes of life; of that great discernment in discovering, and readiness in favouring deserving men; with forty other common topics; I confess, I have neither conscience nor countenance to do it. Because there is no virtue, either of a public or a private life, which some circumstances of your own have not often produced upon the stage of the world; and those few, which, for want of occasions to exert them, might otherwise have passed unseen, or unobserved, by your friends, your enemies* have at length brought to light.

It is true, I should be very loth the bright example of your lordship's virtues should be lost to after-ages, both for their sake and your own; but chiefly because they will be so very necessary to adorn the history of a late reign†; and that is another reason why I would forbear to make a recital of them here; because I have been told by wise men, that as dedications have run for some years past, a good historian will not be apt to have recourse thither in search of characters.

* Lord Somers was impeached by the House of Commons in 1701, but not being brought to trial there, the Lords acquitted him.

† King William's.

There is one point, wherein I think we dedicators would do well to change our measures ; I mean, instead of running on so far upon the praise of our patrons' liberality, to spend a word or two in admiring their patience. I can put no greater compliment on your lordship's, than by giving you so ample an occasion to exercise it at present.—Though perhaps I shall not be apt to reckon much merit to your lordship upon that score, who having been formerly used to tedious harangues* and sometimes to as little purpose, will be the readier to pardon this ; especially when it is offered by one, who is, with all respect and veneration, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most faithful servant,

THE BOOKSELLER.

* When he was Lord Chancellor.

# THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

It is now six years since these papers came first to my hand, which seems to have been about a twelvemonth after they were written; for the author tells us in his preface to the first treatise, that he has calculated it for the year 1697, and in several passages of that discourse, as well as the second, it appears they were written about that time.

As to the author, I can give no manner of satisfaction; however I am credibly informed, that this publication is without his knowledge; for he concludes the copy is lost, having lent it to a person, since dead, and being never in possession of it after: so that, whether the work received his last hand, or whether he intended to fill up the defective places, is likely to remain a secret.

If I should go about to tell the reader, by what accident I became master of these papers, it would, in this unbelieving age, pass for little more than the cant or jargon of the trade. I therefore gladly spare both him and myself so unnecessary a trouble. There yet remains a difficult question, why I published them no sooner. I forbore upon two accounts; first, because I thought I had better work upon my own hands; and secondly, because I was not without some hope of hearing from the author, and receiving his directions. But I have been lately alarmed with intelligence of a surreptitious copy, which a certain great wit had new polished and refined, or, as our present writers express themselves, fitted to the humour of the age; as they have already done, with great felicity to, Don Quixote, Boccalini, La Bruyere, and other authors. However, I thought it fairer dealing to offer the whole work in its naturals. If any gentleman will please to furnish me with a key, in order to explain the more difficult parts, I shall very gratefully acknowledge the favour, and print it by itself.

# THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

## TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE POSTERITY.

SIR,—I here present your highness with the fruits of a very few leisure hours, stolen from the short intervals of a world of business, and of an employment quite alien from such amusements as this the poor production of that refuse of time, which has laid heavy upon my hands during a long prorogation of parliament, a great dearth of foreign news, and a tedious fit of rainy weather; for which, and other reasons, it cannot choose extremely to deserve such a patronage as that of your highness, whose numberless virtues, in so few years, make the world look upon you as the future example to all princes; for although your highness is hardly got clear of infancy, yet has the universal learned world already resolved upon appealing to your future dictates, with the lowest and most resigned submission; fate having decreed you sole arbiter of the productions of human wit, in this polite and most accomplished age. Methinks the number of appellants were enough to shock and startle any judge, of a genius less unlimited than yours; but in order to prevent such glorious trials, the person, it seems, to whose care the education of your highness is committed, has resolved (as I am told) to keep you in almost a universal ignorance of our studies, which it is your inherent birth-right to inspect.

It is amazing to me that this person should have the assurance, in the face of the sun, to go about persuading your highness that our age is almost wholly illiterate, and has hardly produced one writer upon any subject. I know very well, that when your highness shall come to riper years, and have gone through the learning of antiquity, you will be too curious to neglect inquiring into the authors of the very age before you:

and to think that this insolent, in the account he is preparing for your view, designs to reduce them to a number so insignificant as I am ashamed to mention; it moves my zeal and my spleen for the honour and interest of our vast flourishing body, as well as of myself, for whom, I know by long experience, he has professed, and still continues, a peculiar malice.

It is not unlikely that, when your highness will one day peruse what I am now writing, you may be ready to expostulate with your governor upon the credit of what I here affirm, and command him to show you some of our productions. To which he will answer (for I am well informed of his designs), by asking your highness where they are? and what is become of them? and pretend it a demonstration that there never were any, because they are not then to be found. Not to be found! who has mislaid them? are they sunk in the abyss of things? it is certain, that in their own nature, they were light enough to swim upon the surface for all eternity. Therefore the fault is in him, who tied weights so heavy to their heels as to depress them to the centre. Is their very essence destroyed? who has annihilated them? were they drowned by purges, or martyred by pipes? who administered them to the posteriors of ——? But, that it may no longer be a doubt with your highness, who is to be the author of this universal ruin, I beseech you to observe that large and terrible scythe which your governor affects to bear continually about him. Be pleased to remark the length and strength, the sharpness and hardness of his nails and teeth: consider his baneful, abominable breath, enemy to life and matter, infectious and corrupting: and then reflect whether it be possible for any mortal ink and paper of this generation to make a suitable resistance. O! that your highness would one day resolve to disarm this usurping *maître du palais** of his furious engines, and bring your empire *hors de page*.†

* *Comptroller.* The kingdom of France had a race of kings which they call *les roys faineans* (from their doing nothing), who lived lazily in their apartments, while the kingdom was administered by the *mayor de palais;* till Charles Martel, the last mayor, put his master to death and took the kingdom into his own hand.—*Hawkesworth.*

† Out of guardianship.

It were needless to recount the several methods of tyranny and destruction which your governor is pleased to practise upon this occasion. His inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun, there is not one to be heard of: Unhappy infants! many of them barbarously destroyed, before they have so much as learnt their mother tongue to beg for pity. Some he stifles in their cradles; others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die; some he flays alive; others he tears limb from limb. Great numbers are offered to Moloch; and the rest, tainted by his breath, die of a languishing consumption.

But the concern I have most at heart, is for our corporation of poets; from whom I am preparing a petition to your highness, to be subscribed with the names of one hundred and thirty-six of the first rate; but whose immortal productions are never likely to reach your eyes, though each of them is now an humble and earnest appellant for the laurel, and has large comely volumes ready to show, for a support to his pretensions. The never-dying works of these illustrious persons, your governor, sir, has devoted to unavoidable death; and your highness is to be made believe, that our age has never arrived at the honour to produce one single poet.

We confess Immortality to be a great and powerful goddess; but in vain we offer up to her our devotions and our sacrifices, if your highness's governor, who has usurped the priesthood, must, by an unparalleled ambition and avarice, wholly intercept and devour them.

To affirm that our age is altogether unlearned, and devoid of writers in any kind, seems to be an assertion so bold and so false, that I have been some time thinking the contrary may almost be proved by uncontrollable demonstration. It is true, indeed, that although their numbers be vast, and their productions numerous in proportion, yet are they hurried so hastily off the scene, that they escape our memory, and elude our sight. When I first thought of this address, I had prepared a copious list of titles to present your highness, as an

undisputed argument for what I affirm. The originals were posted fresh upon all gates and corners of streets ; but, returning in a very few hours to take a review, they were all torn down, and fresh ones in their places. I inquired after them among readers and booksellers ; but I inquired in vain ; the memorial of them was lost among men ; their places were no more to be found ; and I was laughed to scorn for a clown and a pedant, without all taste and refinement, little versed in the course of present affairs, and that knew nothing of what had passed in the best companies of court and town. So that I can only avow in general to your highness, that we do abound in learning and wit ; but to fix upon particulars, is a task too slippery for my slender abilities. If I should venture in a windy day to affirm to your highness, that there is a large cloud near the horizon, in the form of a bear, another in the zenith, with the head of an ass ; a third to the westward, with claws like a dragon ; and your highness should in a few minutes think fit to examine the truth, it is certain they would all be changed in figure and position ; new ones would arise, and all we could agree upon would be, that clouds there were, but that I was grossly mistaken in the zoography and topography of them.

But your governor perhaps may still insist, and put the question—What is then become of those immense bales of paper, which must needs have been employed in such numbers of books? can these also be wholly annihilate, and so of a sudden, as I pretend? What shall I say in return of so invidious an objection? it ill befits the distance between your highness and me, to send you for ocular conviction to a jakes, or an oven ; to the windows of a bawdy-house, or to a sordid lantern. Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are ten thousand to go out of it, and return no more.

I profess to your highness, in the integrity of my heart, that what I am going to say is literally true this minute I am writing : what revolutions may happen before it shall be ready for your perusal, I can by no means warrant ; however, I beg you to accept it as a specimen of our learning, our politeness, and

our wit. I do therefore affirm, upon the word of a sincere man, that there is now actually in being a certain poet, called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed in a large folio, well bound, and, if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen. There is another, called Nahum Tate, who is ready to make oath that he has caused many reams of verse to be published, whereof both himself and his bookseller (if lawfully required) can still produce authentic copies, and therefore wonders why the world is pleased to make such a secret of it. There is a third, known by the name of Tom Durfey, a poet of vast comprehension, a universal genius, and most profound learning. There are also one Mr. Rymer, and one Mr. Dennis, most profound critics. There is a person styled Dr. Bentley, who has written near a thousand pages of immense erudition, giving a full and true account of a certain squabble, of wonderful importance, between himself and a bookseller: he is a writer of infinite wit and humour; no man rallies with a better grace, and in more sprightly turns. Further, I avow to your highness, that with these eyes I have beheld the person of William Wotton, B.D., who has written a good sizeable volume against a friend of your governor,* (from whom, alas! he must therefore look for little favour), in a most gentlemanly style, adorned with the utmost politeness and civility; replete with discoveries equally valuable for their novelty and use; and embellished with traits of wit, so poignant and so apposite, that he is a worthy yokemate to his forementioned friend.

Why should I go upon further particulars, which might fill a volume with the true eulogies of my contemporary brethren? I shall bequeath this piece of justice to a larger work, wherein I intend to write a character of the present set of wits in our nation: their persons I shall describe particularly and at length, their genius and understandings in miniature.

In the meantime I do here make bold to present your highness with a faithful abstract, drawn from the universal body of all arts and sciences, intended wholly for your service

* Sir William Temple.

and instruction : nor do I doubt in the least, but your highness will peruse it as carefully, and make as considerable improvements, as other young princes have already done, by the many volumes of late years written for a help to their studies.

That your highness may advance in wisdom and virtue, as well as years, and at last outshine all your royal ancestors, shall be the daily prayer of,

Sir, your highness's most devoted, etc.

*December*, 1697.

# THE PREFACE.

THE wits of the present age being so very numerous and penetrating, it seems the grandees of church and state begin to fall under horrible apprehensions, lest these gentlemen, during the intervals of a long peace, should find leisure to pick holes in the weak sides of religion and government. To prevent which, there has been much thought employed of late, upon certain projects for taking off the force and edge of those formidable inquirers, from canvassing and reasoning upon such delicate points. They have at length fixed upon one, which will require some time as well as cost to perfect. Meanwhile, the danger hourly increasing, by new levies of wits, all appointed (as there is reason to fear) with pen, ink, and paper, which may, at an hour's warning, be drawn out into pamphlets, and other offensive weapons, ready for immediate execution, it was judged of absolute necessity, that some present expedient be thought on, till the main design can be brought to maturity. To this end, at a grand committee some days ago, this important discovery was made by a certain curious and refined observer—that seamen have a custom, when they meet a whale, to fling him out an empty tub by way of amusement, to divert him from laying violent hands upon the ship. This parable was immediately mythologised ; the whale was interpreted to be Hobbe's Leviathan, which tosses and plays with all schemes of religion and government, whereof a great many are hollow, and dry, and empty, and noisy, and wooden, and given to rotation : this is the leviathan, whence the terrible wits of our age are said to borrow their weapons. The ship in danger is easily understood to be its old antitype, the commonwealth. But how to analyse the tub, was a matter of difficulty ; when, after long inquiry and debate, the literal meaning was preserved ; and it was decreed

that, in order to prevent these leviathans from tossing and sporting with the commonwealth, which of itself is too apt to fluctuate, they should be diverted from that game by a Tale of a Tub. And, my genius being conceived to lie not unhappily that way, I had the honour done me to be engaged in the performance.

This is the sole design in publishing the following treatise, which I hope will serve for an *interim* of some months to employ those unquiet spirits, till the perfecting of that great work; into the secret of which, it is reasonable the courteous reader should have some little light.

It is intended, that a large academy be erected, capable of containing nine thousand seven hundred forty and three persons; which, by modest computation, is reckoned to be pretty near the current number of wits in this island. These are to be disposed into the several schools of this academy, and there pursue those studies to which their genius most inclines them. The undertaker himself will publish his proposals with all convenient speed; to which I shall refer the curious reader for a more particular account, mentioning at present only a few of the principal schools. There is, first, a large pæderastic school, with French and Italian masters. There is also the spelling school, a very spacious building: the school of looking-glasses: the school of swearing: the school of critics: the school of salivation: the school of hobby-horses: the school of poetry: the school of tops: the school of spleen: the school of gaming: and many others, too tedious to recount. No person to be admitted member into any of these schools without an attestation under two sufficient person's hands certifying him to be a wit.

But, to return: I am sufficiently instructed in the principal duty of a preface, if my genius were capable of arriving at it. Thrice have I forced my imagination to make the tour of my invention, and thrice has it returned empty; the latter having been wholly drained by the following treatise. Not so my more successful brethren the moderns; who will by no means let slip a preface or dedication, without some notable distinguishing stroke to surprise the reader at the entry, and kindle a wonderful

expectation of what is to ensue. Such was that of a most ingenious poet, who, soliciting his brain for something new, compared himself to the hangman, and his patron to the patient: this was *insigne, recens, indictum ore alio.* When I went through that necessary and noble course of study, I had the happiness to observe many such egregious touches, which I shall not injure the authors by transplanting: because I have remarked, that nothing is so very tender as a modern piece of wit, and which is apt to suffer so much in the carriage. Some things are extremely witty to-day, or fasting, or in this place, or at eight o'clock, or over a bottle, or spoke by Mr. What'd'y-call'm, or in a summer's morning: any of the which, by the smallest transposal or misapplication, is utterly annihilate. Thus wit has its walks and purlieus, out of which it may not stray the breadth of a hair, upon peril of being lost. The moderns have artfully fixed this mercury, and reduced it to the circumstances of time, place, and person. Such a jest there is, that will not pass out of Covent-garden; and such a one that is nowhere intelligible but at Hyde-park corner. Now, though it sometimes tenderly affects me to consider, that all the towardly passages I shall deliver in the following treatise, will grow quite out of date and relish with the first shifting of the present scene, yet I must needs subscribe to the justice of this proceeding: because, I cannot imagine why we should be at the expense to furnish wit for succeeding ages, when the former have made no sort of provision for ours: wherein I speak the sentiment of the very newest, and consequently the most orthodox refiners, as well as my own. However, being extremely solicitous that every accomplished person, who has got into the taste of wit calculated for this present month of August, 1679, should descend to the very bottom of all the sublime, throughout this treatise; I hold fit to lay down this general maxim: whatever reader desires to have a thorough comprehension of an author's thoughts, cannot take a better method than by putting himself into the circumstances and postures of life, that the writer was in upon every important passage, as it flowed from his pen: for this will introduce a

parity, and strict correspondence of ideas, between the reader and the author. Now, to assist the diligent reader in so delicate an affair, as far as brevity will permit, I have recollected, that the shrewdest pieces of this treatise were conceived in bed in a garret; at other times, for a reason best known to myself, I thought fit to sharpen my invention with hunger; and, in general, the whole work was begun, continued, and ended, under a long course of physic, and a great want of money. Now, I do affirm, it will be absolutely impossible for the candid peruser to go along with me in a great many bright passages, unless, upon the several difficulties emergent, he will please to capacitate and prepare himself by these directions. And this I lay down as my principal *postulatum*.

Because I have professed to be a most devoted servant of all modern forms, I apprehend some curious wit may object against me, for proceeding thus far in a preface, without declaiming, according to the custom, against the multitude of writers, whereof the whole multitude of writers most reasonably complain. I am just come from perusing some hundreds of prefaces, wherein the authors do, at the very beginning, address the gentle reader concerning this enormous grievance. Of these I have preserved a few examples, and shall set them down as near as my memory has been able to retain them.

One begins thus :—For a man to set up for a writer, when the press swarms with, etc.

Another :—The tax upon paper does not lessen the number of scribblers, who daily pester, etc.

Another :—When every little would-be wit takes pen in hand, 'tis in vain to enter the lists, etc.

Another :—To observe what trash the press swarms with, etc.

Another :—Sir, It is merely in obedience to your commands that I venture into the public; for who upon a less consideration would be of a party with such a rabble of scribblers, etc.

Now, I have two words in my own defence against this objection. First, I am far from granting the number of writers a nuisance to our nation, having strenuously maintained the contrary, in several parts of the following discourse. Secondly,

I do not well understand the justice of this proceeding ; because I observe many of these polite prefaces to be not only from the same hand, but from those who are most voluminous in their several productions. Upon which I shall tell the reader a short tale.

A mountebank, in Leicester-fields, had drawn a huge assembly about him. Among the rest, a fat unwieldly fellow, half stifled in the press, would be every fit crying out, "Lord ! what a filthy crowd is here ! pray, good people, give way a little. Bless me ! what a devil has raked this rabble together ! z——ds ? what squeezing is this ! honest friend, remove your elbow." At last a weaver, that stood next him, could hold no longer. "A plague confound you (said he) for an overgrown sloven ; and who, in the devil's name, I wonder, helps to make up the crowd half so much as yourself ? Don't you consider, with a pox, that you take up more room with that carcass than any five here ? Is not the place as free for us as for you ? bring your own guts to a reasonable compass, and be d——n'd, and then I'll engage we shall have room enough for us all."

There are certain common privileges of a writer, the benefit whereof, I hope, there will be no reason to doubt ; particularly, that where I am not understood, it shall be concluded, that something very useful and profound is couched underneath : and again, that whatever word or sentence is printed in a different character, shall be judged to contain something extraordinary either of wit or sublime.

As for the liberty I have thought fit to take of praising myself, upon some occasions or none, I am sure it will need no excuse, if a multitude of great examples be allowed sufficient authority : for it is here to be noted, that praise was originally a pension paid by the world ; but the moderns, finding the trouble and charge too great in collecting it, have lately bought out the fee-simple ; since which time the right of presentation is wholly in ourselves. For this reason it is, that when an author makes his own eulogy, he uses a certain form to declare and insist upon his title, which is commonly in these or the like words, "I speak without vanity ;" which I think plainly shows it to be a matter

of right and justice. Now I do here once for all declare, that in every encounter of this nature through the following treatise, the form aforesaid is implied; which I mention, to save the trouble of repeating it on so many occasions.

It is a great ease to my conscience, that I have written so elaborate and useful a discourse, without one grain of satire intermixed; which is the sole point wherein I have taken leave to dissent from the famous originals of our age and country. I have observed some satirists to use the public much at the rate that pedants do a naughty boy, ready horsed for discipline: first, expostulate the case, then plead the necessity of the rod from great provocations, and conclude every period with a lash. Now, if I know anything of mankind, these gentlemen might very well spare their reproof and correction: for there is not, through all nature, another so callous and insensible a member as the world's posteriors, whether you apply to it the toe or the birch. Besides, most of our late satirists seem to lie under a sort of mistake; that because nettles have the prerogative to sting, therefore all other weeds must do so too. I make not this comparison out of the least design to detract from these worthy writers; for it is well known among mythologists, that weeds have the pre-eminence over all other vegetables; and therefore the first monarch of this island, whose taste and judgment were so acute and refined, did very wisely root out the roses from the collar of the order, and plant the thistles in their stead, as the nobler flower of the two. For which reason it is conjectured by profounder antiquaries, that the satirical itch, so prevalent in this part of our island, was first brought among us from beyond the Tweed. Here may it long flourish and abound: may it survive and neglect the scorn of the world, with as much ease and contempt as the world is insensible to the lashes of it. May their own dullness, or that of their party, be no discouragement for the authors to proceed; but let them remember, it is with wits as with razors, which are never so apt to cut those they are employed on as when they have lost their edge. Besides, those whose teeth are too rotten to bite, are best, of all others, qualified to revenge that defect with their breath.

I am not like other men, to envy or undervalue the talents I cannot reach ; for which reason I must needs bear a true honour to this large eminent sect of our British writers. And I hope this little panegyric will not be offensive to their ears, since it has the advantage of being only designed for themselves. Indeed, nature herself has taken order, that fame and honour should be purchased at a better pennyworth by satire than by any other productions of the brain ; the world being soonest provoked to praise by lashes, as men are to love. There is a problem in an ancient author, why dedications and other bundles of flattery, run all upon stale musty topics, without the smallest tincture of anything new ; not only to the torment and nauseating of the Christian reader ; but, if not suddenly prevented, to the universal spreading of that pestilential disease, the lethargy, in this island : whereas there is very little satire, which has not something in it untouched before. The defects of the former are usually imputed to the want of invention among those who are dealers in that kind ; but, I think, with a great deal of injustice ; the solution being easy and natural ; for the materials of panegyric, being very few in number, have been long since exhausted. For, as health is but one thing and has been always the same, whereas diseases are by thousands, beside new and daily additions ; so, all the virtues that have been ever in mankind, are to be counted upon a few fingers ; but their follies and vices are innumerable, and time adds hourly to the heap. Now the utmost a poor poet can do, is to get by heart a list of the cardinal virtues, and deal them with his utmost liberality to his hero or his patron : he may ring the changes as far as it will go, and vary his phrase till he has talked round ; but the reader quickly finds it is all pork, with a little variety of sauce. For there is no inventing terms of art beyond our ideas ; and, when our ideas are exhausted terms of art must be so too.

But though the matter for panegyric were as fruitful as the topics of satire, yet would it not be hard to find out a sufficient reason why the latter will be always better received than the first. For, this being bestowed only upon one, or a few persons at a time, is sure to raise envy, and consequently ill words from

the rest, who have no share in the blessing ; but satire, being levelled at all, is never resented for an offence by any, since every individual person makes bold to understand it of others, and very wisely removes his particular part of the burden upon the shoulders of the world, which are broad enough, and able to bear it. To this purpose, I have sometimes reflected upon the difference between Athens and England, with respect to the point before us. In the Attic commonwealth, it was the privilege and birth-right of every citizen and poet to rail aloud, and in public, or to expose upon the stage, by name, any person they pleased, though of the greatest figure, whether a Creon, an Hyperbolus, an Alcibiades, or a Demosthenes ; but on the other side, the least reflecting word let fall against the people, in general, was immediately caught up, and revenged upon the authors, however considerable for their quality or their merits. Whereas in England it is just the reverse of all this. Here, you may securely display your utmost rhetoric against mankind, in the face of the world ; tell them, "That all are gone astray ; that there is none that doth good, no not one ; that we live in the very dregs of time ; that knavery and atheism are epidemic as the pox ; that honesty is fled with Astræa ;" with any other commonplaces, equally new and eloquent, which are furnished by the *splendida bilis*. And when you have done, the whole audience, far from being offended, shall return you thanks as a deliverer of precious and useful truths. Nay, further ; it is but to venture your lungs, and you may preach in Covent-garden against foppery and fornication, and something else : against pride and dissimulation and bribery, at Whitehall : you may expose rapine and injustice in the inns of court chapel : and in a city pulpit, be as fierce as you please against avarice, hypocrisy, and extortion. 'Tis but a ball banded to and fro, and every man carries a racket about him, to strike it from himself, among the rest of the company. But, on the other side, whoever should mistake the nature of things so far as to drop but a single hint in public, how such a one starved half the fleet, and half poisoned the rest : how such a one, from a true principle of love and honour, pays no debts but for wenches and play : how such a

one has got a clap, and runs out of his estate : how Paris, bribed by Juno and Venus, loth to offend either party, slept out the whole cause on the bench : or, how such an orator makes long speeches in the senate, with much thought, little sense, and to no purpose ; whoever, I say, should venture to be thus particular, must expect to be imprisoned for *scandalum magnatum;* to have challenges sent him ; to be sued for defamation ; and to be brought before the bar of the house.

But I forget that I am expatiating on a subject wherein I have no concern, having neither a talent nor an inclination for satire. On the other side, I am so entirely satisfied with the whole present procedure of human things, that I have been some years preparing materials towards "A panegyric upon the World ;" to which I intended to add a second part, entitled, "A modest defence of the Proceedings of the Rabble in all Ages." Both these I had thoughts to publish, by way of appendix to the following treatise ; but finding my commonplace book fill much slower than I had reason to expect, I have chosen to defer them to another occasion. Besides, I have been unhappily prevented in that design by a certain domestic misfortune ; in the particulars whereof, though it would be very seasonable, and much in the modern way, to inform the gentle reader, and would also be of great assistance towards extending this preface into the size now in vogue, which by rule ought to be large in proportion as the subsequent volume is small ; yet I shall now dismiss our impatient reader from any further attendance at the porch, and, having duly prepared his mind by a preliminary discourse, shall gladly introduce him to the sublime mysteries that ensue.

# A TALE OF A TUB.

## SECTION I.

### THE INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER has an ambition to be heard in a crowd, must press, and squeeze, and thrust, and climb, with indefatigable pains, till he has exalted himself to a certain degree of altitude above them. Now in all assemblies, though you wedge them ever so close, we may observe this peculiar property, that over their heads there is room enough, but how to reach it is the difficult point; it being as hard to get quit of number as of hell;

> "——evadere ad auras,
> Hoc opus, hic labor est."
>
> —VIRGIL.

To this end, the philosopher's way, in all ages, has been by erecting certain edifices in the air: but, whatever practice and reputation these kind of structures have formerly possessed, or may still continue in, not excepting even that of Socrates, when he was suspended in a basket to help

contemplation, I think, with due submission, they seem to labour under two inconveniences. First, That the foundations being laid too high, they have been often out of sight, and ever out of hearing. Secondly, That the materials, being very transitory, have suffered much from inclemencies of air, especially in these north-west regions.

Therefore, towards the just performance of this great work, there remain but three methods that I can think of; whereof the wisdom of our ancestors being highly sensible, has, to encourage all aspiring adventurers, thought fit to erect three wooden machines for the use of those orators who desire to talk much without interruption. These are, the pulpit, the ladder, and the stage itinerant. For as to the bar, though it be compounded of the same matter, and designed for the same use, it cannot, however, be well allowed the honour of a fourth, by reason of its level or inferior situation exposing it to perpetual interruption from collaterals. Neither can the bench itself, though raised to a prominency, put in a better claim, whatever its advocates insist on. For, if they please to look into the original design of its erection, and the circumstances or adjuncts subservient to that design, they will soon acknowledge the present practice exactly correspondent to the primitive institution, and both to answer the etymology of the name, which in the Phœnician tongue is a word of great signification, importing, if literally interpreted, the place of sleep; but in common acceptation, a seat well bolstered and cushioned, for the repose of old and gouty limbs: *senes ut in otia tuta recedant.* Fortune being indebted to them this part of retaliation, that, as formerly they have long talked while others slept; so now they may sleep as long while others talk.

But if no other argument could occur to exclude the

bench and the bar from the list of oratorial machines, it were sufficient that the admission of them would overthrow a number, which I was resolved to establish, whatever argument it might cost me; in imitation of that prudent method observed by many other philosophers and great clerks, whose chief art in division has been to grow fond of some proper mystical number, which their imaginations have rendered sacred, to a degree, that they force common reason to find room for it, in every part of nature; reducing, including, and adjusting every genus and species within that compass, by coupling some against their wills, and banishing others at any rate. Now, among all the rest, the profound number THREE is that which has most employed my sublimest speculations, nor ever without wonderful delight. There is now in the press, and will be published next term, a panegyrical essay of mine upon this number; wherein I have, by most convincing proofs, not only reduced the senses and the elements under its banner, but brought over several deserters from its two great rivals, SEVEN and NINE; the two climacterics.

Now, the first of these oratorial machines, in place as well as dignity, is the pulpit. Of pulpits there are in this island several sorts; but I esteem only that made of timber from the *sylva Caledonia*, which agrees very well with our climate. If it be upon its decay, it is the better both for conveyance of sound, and for other reasons to be mentioned by-and-by. The degree of perfection in shape and size I take to consist in being extremely narrow, with little ornament; and, best of all, without cover (for, by ancient rule, it ought to be the only uncovered vessel in every assembly, where it is rightfully used), by which means, from its near resemblance to a pillory, it will ever have a mighty influence on human ears.

Of ladders I need say nothing: it is observed by foreigners themselves, to the honour of our country, that we excel all nations in our practice and understanding of this machine. The ascending orators do not only oblige their audience in the agreeable delivery, but the whole world in the early publication of their speeches; which I look upon as the choicest treasury of our British eloquence, and whereof, I am informed, that worthy citizen and bookseller, Mr. John Dunton, hath made a faithful and painful collection, which he shortly designs to publish, in twelve volumes in folio, illustrated with copper-plates. A work highly useful and curious, and altogether worthy of such a hand.

The last engine of orators is the stage itinerant, erected with much sagacity, *sub Jove pluvio, in triviis et quadriviis.* It is the great seminary of the two former, and its orators are sometimes preferred to the one, and sometimes to the other, in proportion to their deservings; there being a strict and perpetual intercourse between all three.

From this accurate deduction it is manifest, that for obtaining attention in public there is of necessity required a superior position of place. But, although this point be generally granted, yet the cause is little agreed in; and it seems to me that very few philosophers have fallen into a true, natural solution of this phenomenon. The deepest account, and the most fairly digested of any I have yet met with, is this; that air being a heavy body, and therefore, according to the system of Epicurus, continually descending, must needs be more so when loaded and pressed down by words; which are also bodies of much weight and gravity, as it is manifest from those deep impressions they make and leave upon us; and therefore must be delivered from a due altitude, or else they will neither carry a good aim, nor fall down with a sufficient force.

" Corpoream quoque enim vocem constare fatendum est,
Et sonitum, quoniam possunt impellere sensus."

—Lucr. Lib. 4.

And I am the readier to favour this conjecture, from a common observation, that in the several assemblies of these orators nature itself has instructed the hearers to stand with their mouths open, and erected parallel to the horizon, so as they may be intersected by a perpendicular line from the zenith to the centre of the earth. In which position, if the audience be well compact, every one carries home a share, and little or nothing is lost.

I confess there is something yet more refined, in the contrivance and structure of our modern theatres. For, first, the pit is sunk below the stage, with due regard to the institution above deduced; that, whatever weighty matter shall be delivered thence, whether it be lead or gold, may fall plump into the jaws of certain critics, as I think they are called, which stand ready opened to devour them. Then, the boxes are built round, and raised to a level with the scene, in deference to the ladies; because, that large portion of wit, laid out in raising pruriences and protuberances, is observed to run much upon a line, and ever in a circle. The whining passions, and little starved conceits, are gently wafted up by their own extreme levity, to the middle region, and there fix and are frozen by the frigid understandings of the inhabitants. Bombastry and buffoonery, by nature lofty and light, soar highest of all, and would be lost in the roof, if the prudent architect had not, with much foresight, contrived for them a fourth place, called the twelve-penny gallery, and there planted a suitable colony, who greedily intercept them in their passage.

Now this physico-logical scheme of oratorial receptacles

or machines contains a great mystery; being a type, a sign, an emblem, a shadow, a symbol, bearing analogy to the spacious commonwealth of writers, and to those methods by which they must exalt themselves to a certain eminency above the inferior world. By the pulpit are adumbrated the writings of our modern saints in Great Britain, as they have spiritualised and refined them, from the dross and grossness of sense and human reason. The matter, as we have said, is of rotten wood; and that upon two considerations; because it is the quality of rotten wood to give light in the dark: and secondly, because its cavities are full of worms; which is a type with a pair of handles, having a respect to the two principal qualifications of the orator, and the two different fates attending upon his works.

The ladder is an adequate symbol of *faction* and of poetry, to both of which so noble a number of authors are indebted for their fame. Of faction, because.* . . . *Hiatus in MS.* . . . Of *poetry*, because its orators do *perorare* with a song; and because, climbing up by slow degrees, fate is sure to turn them off before they can reach within many steps of the top: and because it is a preferment attained by transferring of propriety, and a confounding of *meum* and *tuum*.

Under the stage itinerant are couched those productions designed for the pleasure and delight of mortal man; such as, Six-penny-worth of Wit, Westminster Drolleries, Delightful Tales, Complete Jesters, and the like; by which the writers of and for *Grub-street* have in these latter ages so nobly triumphed over Time; have clipped his wings, pared his nails, filed his teeth, turned back his hour-glass, blunted his scythe, and drawn the hobnails out of his shoes.

* A pretended defect in the manuscript is a favourite device with Swift.

It is under this class I have presumed to list my present treatise, being just come from having the honour conferred upon me to be adopted a member of that illustrious fraternity.

Now, I am not unaware how the productions of the Grub-street brotherhood have of late years fallen under many prejudices, nor how it has been the perpetual employment of two junior start-up societies to ridicule them and their authors, as unworthy their established post in the commonwealth of wit and learning. Their own consciences will easily inform them whom I mean; nor has the world been so negligent a looker-on as not to observe the continual efforts made by the societies of Gresham* and of Will's† to edify a name and reputation upon the ruin of OURS. And this is yet a more feeling grief to us, upon the regards of tenderness as well as of justice, when we reflect on their proceedings not only as unjust, but as ungrateful, undutiful, and unnatural. For how can it be forgot by the world or themselves, to say nothing of our own records, which are full and clear in the point, that they both are seminaries not only of our planting, but our watering too? I am informed, our two rivals have lately made an offer to enter into the lists with united forces, and challenge us to a comparison of books, both as to weight and number. In return to which, with license from our president, I humbly offer two answers: first, we say, the proposal is like that which Archimedes made upon a smaller affair, including an impossibility in the practice; for where can they find scales of capacity enough for the first; or an arithmetician of capacity enough for the second? Secondly, we are ready to accept the challenge;

* The Royal Society met at Gresham College.

† Will's famous coffee-house, in Covent-garden.

but with this condition, that a third indifferent person be assigned, to whose impartial judgment it should be left to decide which society each book, treatise, or pamphlet do most properly belong to. This point, God knows, is very far from being fixed at present; for we are ready to produce a catalogue of some thousands, which in all common justice ought to be entitled to our fraternity, but by the revolted and new-fangled writers, most prefidiously ascribed to the others. Upon all which, we think it very unbecoming our prudence that the determination should be remitted to the authors themselves; when our adversaries, by briguing and caballing, have caused so universal a defection from us, that the greatest part of our society has already deserted to them, and our nearest friends begin to stand aloof, as if they were half ashamed to own us.

This is the utmost I am authorised to say upon so ungrateful and melancholy a subject; because we are extremely unwilling to inflame a controversy whose continuance may be so fatal to the interests of us all, desiring much rather that things be amicably composed; and we shall so far advance on our side as to be ready to receive the two prodigals with open arms whenever they shall think fit to return from their husks and their harlots; which, I think, from the present course of their studies, they most properly may be said to be engaged in; and, like an indulgent parent, continue to them our affection and our blessing.

But the greatest maim given to that general reception which the writings of our society have formerly received (next to the transitory state of all sublunary things) has been a superficial vein among many readers of the present age, who will by no means be persuaded to inspect beyond the surface and the rind of things; whereas, wisdom is

a fox, who, after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to dig out; it is a cheese, which, by how much the richer, has the thicker, the homelier, and the coarser coat; and whereof, to a judicious palate, the maggots are the best: it is a sack-posset, wherein the deeper you go, you will find it the sweeter. Wisdom is a hen, whose cackling we must value and consider, because it is attended with an egg; but then lastly, it is a nut, which, unless you choose with judgment, may cost you a tooth, and pay you with nothing but a worm. In consequence of these momentous truths, the grubæan sages have always chosen to convey their precepts and their arts shut up within the vehicles of types and fables; which having been perhaps more careful and curious in adorning than was altogether necessary, it has fared with these vehicles, after the usual fate of coaches over-finely painted and gilt, that the transitory gazers have so dazzled their eyes and filled their imaginations with the outward lustre, as neither to regard or consider the person or the parts of the owner within. A misfortune we undergo with somewhat less reluctancy, because it has been common to us with Pythagoras, Æsop, Socrates, and other of our predecessors.

However, that neither the world nor ourselves may any longer suffer by such misunderstandings, I have been prevailed on, after much importunity from my friends, to travel in a complete and laborious dissertation upon the prime productions of our society; which, beside their beautiful externals, for the gratification of superficial readers, have darkly and deeply couched under them the most finished and refined systems of all sciences and arts; as I do not doubt to lay open, by untwisting or unwinding, and either to draw up by exantlation, or display by incision.

This great work was entered upon some years ago, by one of our most eminent members; he began with the *History of Reynard the Fox*, but neither lived to publish his essay nor to proceed farther in so useful an attempt; which is very much to be lamented, because the discovery he made and communicated with his friends is now universally received; nor do I think any of the learned will dispute that famous treatise to be a complete body of civil knowledge, and the revelation, or rather the apocalypse, of all state arcana. But the progress I have made is much greater, having finished my annotations upon several dozens; from some of which I shall impart a few hints to the candid reader, as far as will be necessary to the conclusion at which I aim.

The first piece I have handled is that of *Tom Thumb*, whose author was a Pythagorean philosopher. This dark treatise contains the whole scheme of the Metempsychosis, deducing the progress of the soul through all her stages.

The next is *Dr. Faustus*, penned by Artephius, an author *bonæ notæ*, and an *adeptus;* he published it in the nine-hundred-eighty-fourth year of his age; this writer proceeds wholly by reincrudation, or in the *via humida;* and the marriage between Faustus and Helen does most conspicuously dilucidate the fermenting of the male and female dragon.

*Whittington and his Cat* is the work of that mysterious rabbi, Jehuda Hannasi, containing a defence of the gemara of the Jerusalem misna,† and its just preference to that of Babylon, contrary to the vulgar opinion.

* Said to have prolonged his life to a thousand years, and then died voluntarily.

† The gemara is the decision, explanation, or interpretation of the Jewish rabbis; and the misna is properly the code or body of the Jewish civil or common law.—*Hawkesworth.*

*The Hind and Panther.* This is the masterpiece of a famous writer now living, intended for a complete abstract of sixteen thousand school-men, from Scotus to Bellarmin.

*Tommy Pots.** Another piece, supposed by the same hand, by way of supplement to the former.

*The Wise Men of Gotham, cum appendice.* This is a treatise of immense erudition, being the great original and fountain of those arguments bandied about both in France and England for a just defence of the moderns' learning and wit, against the presumption, the pride, and ignorance of the ancients. This unknown author has so exhausted the subject, that a penetrating reader will easily discover whatever has been written since upon that dispute to be little more than repetition. An abstract of this treatise has been lately published by a worthy member of our society.

These notices may serve to give the learned reader an idea, as well as a taste, of what the whole work is likely to produce; wherein I have now altogether circumscribed my thoughts and my studies; and, if I can bring it to a perfection before I die, shall reckon I have well employed the poor remains of an unfortunate life. This, indeed, is more than I can justly expect, from a quill worn to the pith in the service of the state, in *pros* and *cons* upon Popish plots, and meal-tubs, and exclusion bills, and passive obedience, and addresses of lives and fortunes, and prerogative, and property,† and liberty of conscience, and letters to a friend; from an understanding and a conscience threadbare and ragged with perpetual turning; from a head broken in a hundred places by the malignants of the opposite factions; and from a body spent with poxes ill cured, by trusting to

* A popular ballad of the time.

† *Popery* in the First Edition.

bawds and surgeons, who, as it afterwards appeared, were professed enemies to me and the government, and revenged their party's quarrel upon my nose and shins. Fourscore and eleven pamphlets have I written under three reigns, and for the service of six-and-thirty factions. But, finding the state has no farther occasion for me and my ink, I retire willingly to draw it out into speculations more becoming a philosopher; having, to my unspeakable comfort, passed a long life with a conscience void of offence.*

But to return. I am assured, from the reader's candour, that the brief specimen I have given will easily clear all the rest of our society's productions from an aspersion grown, as it is manifest, out of envy and ignorance; that they are of little farther use or value to mankind beyond the common entertainments of their wit and their style; for these I am sure have never yet been disputed by our keenest adversaries; in both which, as well as the more profound and mystical part, I have, throughout this treatise, closely followed the most applauded originals. And to render all complete, I have, with much thought and application of mind, so ordered, that the chief title prefixed to it, I mean that under which I design it shall pass in the common conversations of court and town, is modelled exactly after the manner peculiar to our society.

I confess to have been somewhat liberal in the business of titles, having observed the humour of multiplying them to bear great vogue among certain writers, whom I exceedingly reverence. And indeed it seems not unreasonable that books, the children of the brain, should have the honour to be christened with variety of names as well as other infants of quality. Our famous Dryden has

* In the First Edition *towards God and towards men* is added.

ventured to proceed a point farther, endeavouring to introduce also a multiplicity of godfathers; which is an improvement of much more advantage upon a very obvious account. It is a pity this admirable invention has not been better cultivated, so as to grow by this time into general imitation, when such an authority serves it for a precedent. Nor have my endeavours been wanting to second so useful an example; but it seems there is an unhappy expense usually annexed to the calling of a godfather, which was clearly out of my head, as it is very reasonable to believe. Where the pinch lay I cannot certainly affirm; but having employed a world of thoughts and pains to split my treatise into forty sections, and having entreated forty lords of my acquaintance that they would do me the honour to stand, they all made it a matter of conscience, and sent me their excuses.

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## SECTION II.

ONCE upon a time there was a man who had three sons by one wife,* and all at a birth, neither could the midwife tell certainly which was the eldest. Their father died while they were young; and upon his death-bed, calling the lads to him, spoke thus:

"Sons, because I have purchased no estate, nor was born to any, I have long considered of some good legacies to bequeath you; and at last, with much care, as well as expense, have provided each of you (here they are) a new

* Peter represents the Church of Rome, Martin [Luther], the Church of England, and Jack [Calvin], Protestant dissent. Bearing this in mind, the reader will have little difficulty in interpreting the chief points in the satire.

coat. Now, you are to understand that these coats have two virtues contained in them; one is, that with good wearing they will last you fresh and sound as long as you live; the other is, that they will grow in the same proportion with your bodies, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit. Here; let me see them on you before I die. So; very well; pray, children, wear them clean, and brush them often. You will find in my will, here it is, full instructions in every particular concerning the wearing and management of your coats; wherein you must be very exact, to avoid the penalties I have appointed for every trangression or neglect, upon which your future fortunes will entirely depend. I have also commanded in my will that you should live together in one house like brethren and friends, for then you will be sure to thrive, and not otherwise."

Here the story says, this good father died, and the three sons went all together to seek their fortunes.

I shall not trouble you with recounting what adventures they met for the first seven years, any farther than by taking notice that they carefully observed their father's will, and kept their coats in very good order: that they travelled through several countries, encountered a reasonable quantity of giants, and slew certain dragons.

Being now arrived at the proper age for producing themselves, they came up to town, and fell in love with the ladies, but especially three, who about that time were in chief reputation; the Duchess d'Argent, Madame de Grands Titres, and the Countess d'Orgueil.* On their first appearance our three adventurers met with a very bad reception; and soon with great sagacity guessing out the reason, they quickly began to improve in the good qualities

* Covetousness, ambition, and pride.

of the town; they wrote, and rallied, and rhymed, and sung, and said, and said nothing; they drank, and fought, and whored, and slept, and swore, and took snuff; they went to new plays on the first night, haunted the chocolate-houses, beat the watch, lay on bulks, and got claps: they bilked hackney-coachmen, ran in debt with shop-keepers, and lay with their wives; they killed bailiffs, kicked fiddlers down stairs, eat at Locket's,* loitered at Will's; they talked of the drawing-room, and never came there; dined with lords they never saw; whispered a duchess, and spoke never a word; exposed the scrawls of their laundress for billets-doux of quality; came over just from court, and were never seen in it; attended the levee *sub dio;* got a list of peers by heart in one company, and with great familiarity retailed them in another. Above all, they constantly attended those committees of senators who are silent in the house and loud in the coffee-house; where they nightly adjourn to chew the cud of politics, and are encompassed with a ring of disciples, who lie in wait to catch up their droppings. The three brothers had acquired forty other qualifications of the like stamp, too tedious to recount, and by consequence were justly reckoned the most accomplished persons in the town; but all would not suffice, and the ladies aforesaid continued still inflexible. To clear up which difficulty I must, with the reader's good leave and patience, have recourse to some points of weight, which the authors of that age have not sufficiently illustrated.

For about this time it happened a sect arose whose tenets obtained and spread very far, especially in the *grand monde*, and among everybody of good fashion. They worshipped a sort of idol, who, as their doctrine delivered,

* A noted tavern.

did daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest part of the house, on an altar erected about three foot; he was shown in the posture of a Persian emperor, sitting on a superficies, with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign; whence it is that some learned men pretend to deduce his original from Jupiter Capitolinus. At his left hand, beneath the altar, hell seemed to open and catch at the animals the idol was creating; to prevent which, certain of his priests hourly flung in pieces of the uninformed mass, or substance, and sometimes whole limbs already enlivened, which that horrid gulf insatiably swallowed, terrible to behold. The goose was also held a subaltern divinity or *deus minorum gentium*, before whose shrine was sacrificed that creature whose hourly food is human gore, and who is in so great renown abroad for being the delight and favourite of the Ægyptian Cercopithecus. Millions of these animal were cruelly slaughtered every day to appease the hunger of that consuming deity. The chief idol was also worshipped as the inventor of the yard and needle; whether as the god of seamen, or on account of certain other mystical attributes, has not been sufficiently cleared.

The worshippers of this deity had also a system of their belief, which seemed to turn upon the following fundamentals. They held the universe to be a large suit of clothes, which invests everything; that the earth is invested by the air; the air is invested by the stars; and the stars are invested by the *primum mobile*. Look on this globe of earth, you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land but a fine coat faced with green? or the sea, but a waistcoat of water-tabby? Proceed to the particular works

of the creation, you will find how curious journeyman Nature has been to trim up the vegetable beaux; observe how sparkish a periwig adorns the head of a beech, and what a fine doublet of white satin is worn by the birch. To conclude from all, what is man himself but a micro-coat, or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings? As to his body there can be no dispute; but examine even the acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order towards furnishing out an exact dress: to instance no more; is not religion a cloak, honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt, self-love a surtout, vanity a shirt, and conscience a pair of breeches, which, though a cover for lewdness as well as nastiness, is easily slipt down for the service of both?

These postulata being admitted, it will follow in due course of reasoning that those beings, which the world calls improperly suits of clothes, are in reality the most refined species of animals; or, to proceed higher, that they are rational creatures or men. For, is it not manifest that they live, and move, and talk, and perform all other offices of human life? are not beauty, and wit, and mien, and breeding, their inseparable proprieties? in short, we see nothing but them, hear nothing but them. Is it not they who walk the streets, fill up parliament-, coffee-, play-, bawdy-houses? It is true, indeed, that these animals, which are vulgarly called suits of clothes, or dresses, do, according to certain compositions, receive different appellations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain, and a red gown, and white rod, and a great horse, it is called a lord-mayor: if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a bishop.

Others of these professors, though agreeing in the main system, were yet more refined upon certain branches of it; and held that man was an animal compounded of two dresses, the natural and celestial suit, which were the body and the soul: that the soul was the outward, and the body the inward clothing; that the latter was *ex traduce;* but the former of daily creation and circumfusion; this last they proved by scripture, because in them we live, and move, and have our being; as likewise by philosophy, because they are all in all, and all in every part. Besides, said they, separate these two and you will find the body to be only a senseless unsavoury carcase; by all which it is manifest that the outward dress must needs be the soul.

To this system of religion were tagged several subaltern doctrines, which were entertained with great vogue: as particularly the faculties of the mind were deduced by the learned among them in this manner; embroidery was sheer wit, gold fringe was agreeable conversation, gold lace was repartee, a huge long periwig was humour, and a coat full of powder was very good raillery—all which required abundance of *finesse* and *delicatesse* to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance after times and fashions.

I have, with much pains and reading, collected out of ancient authors this short summary of a body of philosophy and divinity, which seems to have been composed by a vein and race of thinking very different from any other systems either ancient or modern. And it was not merely to entertain or satisfy the reader's curiosity, but rather to give him light into several circumstances of the following story; that, knowing the state of dispositions and opinions in an age so remote, he may better comprehend those great events which were the issue of them. I advise, therefore, the

courteous reader to peruse with a world of application, again and again, whatever I have written upon this matter. And so leaving these broken ends, I carefully gather up the chief thread of my story and proceed.

These opinions, therefore, were so universal, as well as the practices of them, among the refined part of court and town, that our three brother adventurers, as their circumstances then stood, were strangely at a loss. For, on the one side, the three ladies they addressed themselves to, whom we have named already, were ever at the very top of the fashion, and abhorred all that were below it but the breadth of a hair. On the other side, their father's will was very precise; and it was the main precept in it, with the greatest penalties annexed, not to add to or diminish from their coats one thread, without a positive command in the will. Now, the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and besides so neatly sewn, you would swear they were all of a piece; but at the same time very plain, and with little or no ornament: and it happened that before they were a month in town great shoulder-knots came up — straight all the world was shoulder-knots—no approaching the ladies' *ruelles* without the *quota* of shoulder-knots. That fellow, cries one, has no soul; where is his shoulder-knot? Our three brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. If they went to the playhouse the door-keeper showed them into the twelvepenny gallery; if they called a boat, says a waterman, "I am first sculler;" if they stepped to the Rose to take a bottle, the drawer would cry, "Friend, we sell no ale;" if they went to visit a lady, a footman met them at the door with "Pray send up your message." In this unhappy case they went immediately to consult their

father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot. What should they do?—what temper should they find?—obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought one of the brothers, who happened to be more book-learned than the other two, said he had found an expedient. It is true, said he, there is nothing here in this will, *totidem verbis*, making mention of shoulder-knots: but I dare conjecture we may find them *inclusive*, or *totidem syllabis*. This distinction was immediately approved by all, and so they fell again to examine; but their evil star had so directed the matter that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writings. Upon which disappointment, he who found the former evasion took heart, and said, "Brothers, there are yet hopes; for though we cannot find them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage we shall make them out *tertio modo* or *totidem literis*. This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and soon picked out S, H, O, U, L, D, E, R; when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty! but the distinguishing brother, for whom we shall hereafter find a name, now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument that K was a modern, illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor anywhere to be found in ancient manuscripts. It is true, said he, the word Calendæ hath in Q. V. C.* been sometimes written with a K, but erroneously; for in the best copies it has been ever spelt with a C. And, by consequence, it was a gross mistake in our language to spell knot with a K; but that from henceforward he would take care it

* Quibusdam veteribus codicibus.

should be written with a C. Upon this all farther difficulty vanished—shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno*, and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best. But, as human happiness is of a very short duration, so in those days were human fashions, upon which it entirely depends. Shoulder-knots had their time, and we must now imagine them in their decline; for a certain lord came just from Paris, with fifty yards of gold lace upon his coat, exactly trimmed after the court fashion of that month. In two days all mankind appeared closed up in bars of gold lace: whoever durst peep abroad without his complement of gold lace was as scandalous as a ——, and as ill received among the women: what should our three knights do in this momentous affair? they had sufficiently strained a point already in the affair of shoulder-knots: upon recourse to the will, nothing appeared there but *altum silentium*. That of the shoulder-knots was a loose, flying, circumstantial point; but this of gold lace seemed too considerable an alteration without better warrant; it did *aliquo modo essentiæ adhærere*, and therefore required a positive precept. But about this time it fell out that the learned brother aforesaid had read *Aristotelis dialectica*, and especially that wonderful piece *de interpretatione*, which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself; like commentators on the Revelations, who proceed prophets without understanding a syllable of the text. Brothers, said he, you are to be informed that of wills *duo sunt genera*, nuncupatory and scriptory: that in the scriptory will here before us there is no precept or mention about gold lace, *conceditur*: but *si idem affirmetur de nuncupatorio, negatur*. For, brothers, if you remember, we heard a fellow say when we were boys that he heard my father's man say that he would

advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it. By G——! that is very true, cries the other; I remember it perfectly well, said the third. And so without more ado they got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.

A while after there came up all in fashion a pretty sort of flame-coloured satin for linings; and the mercer brought a pattern of it immediately to our three gentlemen; An please your worships, said he, my lord Conway and Sir John Walters had linings out of this very piece last night: it takes wonderfully, and I shall not have a remnant left enough to make my wife a pincushion by to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. Upon this they fell again to rummage the will, because the present case also required a positive precept—the lining being held by orthodox writers to be of the essence of the coat. After a long search they could fix upon nothing to the matter in hand, except a short advice of their father in the will to take care of fire and put out their candles before they went to sleep. This, though a good deal for the purpose, and helping very far towards self-conviction, yet not seeming wholly of force to establish a command (being resolved to avoid further scruple as well as future occasion for scandal), says he that was the scholar, I remember to have read in wills of a codicil annexed, which is indeed a part of the will, and what it contains has equal authority with the rest. Now, I have been considering of this same will here before us, and I cannot reckon it to be complete for want of such a codicil: I will therefore fasten one in its proper place very dexterously—I have had it by me some time—it was written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather's, and talks a great deal, as good luck would have it, of this very flame-coloured

satin. The project was immediately approved by the other two; an old parchment scroll was tagged on according to art in the form of a codicil annexed, and the satin bought and worn.

Next winter a player, hired for the purpose by the corporation of fringe-makers, acted his part in a new comedy, all covered with silver fringe, and, according to the laudable custom, gave rise to that fashion. Upon which the brothers, consulting their father's will, to their great astonishment found these words; *item*, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats, etc., with a penalty, in case of disobedience, too long here to insert. However, after some pause, the brother so often mentioned for his erudition, who was well skilled in criticisms, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless, that the same word which in the will is called fringe does also signify a broomstick: and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not he humbly conceived in propriety of speech be reasonably applied to a broomstick: but it was replied upon him that this epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again why their father should forbid them to wear a broomstick on their coats—a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent; upon which he was taken up short, as one that spoke irreverently of a mystery, which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into or nicely reasoned upon. And, in short, their father's authority being now considerably sunk, this expedient was allowed to serve as a lawful dispensation for wearing their full proportion of silver fringe

A while after was revived an old fashion, long antiquated, of embroidery with Indian figures of men, women, and children. Here they remembered but too well how their father had always abhorred this fashion; that he made several paragraphs on purpose, importing his utter detestation of it, and bestowing his everlasting curse to his sons whenever they should wear it. For all this, in a few days they appeared higher in the fashion than anybody else in the town. But they solved the matter by saying that these figures were not at all the same with those that were formerly worn and were meant in the will. Besides, they did not wear them in the sense as forbidden by their father; but as they were a commendable custom, and of great use to the public. That these rigorous clauses in the will did therefore require some allowance and a favourable interpretation, and ought to be understood *cum grano salis.*

But fashions perpetually altering in that age, the scholastic brother grew weary of searching farther evasions, and solving everlasting contradictions. Resolved, therefore, at all hazards, to comply with the modes of the world, they concerted matters together, and agreed unanimously to lock up their father's will in a strong box, brought out of Greece or Italy, I have forgotten which, and trouble themselves no farther to examine it, but only refer to its authority whenever they thought fit. In consequence whereof, a while after it grew a general mode to wear an infinite number of points, most of them tagged with silver: upon which the scholar pronounced, *ex cathedrâ*, that points were absolutely *jure paterno*, as they might very well remember. It is true, indeed, the fashion prescribed somewhat more than were directly named in the will; however, that they, as heirs-general of their father, had power to make and add certain clauses for public emolument, though not deducible,

*totidem verbis*, from the letter of the will, or else *multa absurda sequerentur*. This was understood for canonical, and therefore, on the following Sunday, they came to church all covered with points.

The learned brother, so often mentioned, was reckoned the best scholar in all that or the next street to it, insomuch as, having run something behindhand in the world, he obtained the favour of a certain lord* to receive him into his house, and to teach his children. A while after the lord died, and he, by long practice upon his father's will, found the way of contriving a deed of conveyance of that house to himself and his heirs; upon which he took possession, turned the young squires out, and received his brothers in their stead.

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## SECTION III.

### A DIGRESSION CONCERNING CRITICS.

ALTHOUGH I have been hitherto as cautious as I could, upon all occasions, most nicely to follow the rules and methods of writing laid down by the example of our illustrious moderns; yet has the unhappy shortness of my memory led me into an error from which I must immediately extricate myself, before I can decently pursue my principal subject. I confess with shame it was an unpardonable omission to proceed so far as I have already done before I had performed the due discourses, expostulatory, supplicatory, or deprecatory, with my good lords the critics. Towards some atonement for this grievous neglect, I do

* Constantine the Great.

here make bold humbly to present them with a short account of themselves and their art, by looking into the original and pedigree of the word, as it is generally understood among us; and very briefly considering the ancient and present state thereof.

By the word critic, at this day so frequent in all conversations, there have sometimes been distinguished three very different species of mortal men, according as I have read in ancient books and pamphlets. For first, by this term were understood such persons as invented or drew up rules for themselves and the world, by observing which a careful reader might be able to pronounce upon the productions of the learned, form his taste to a true relish of the sublime and the admirable, and divide every beauty of matter or of style from the corruption that apes it: in their common perusal of books singling out the errors and defects, the nauseous, the fulsome, the dull, and the impertinent, with the caution of a man that walks through Edinburgh streets in a morning, who is indeed as careful as he can to watch diligently and spy out the filth in his way; not that he is curious to observe the colour and complexion of the ordure, or take its dimensions, much less to be paddling in or tasting it; but only with a design to come out as cleanly as he may. These men seem, though very erroneously, to have understood the appellation of critic in a literal sense; that one principal part of his office was to praise and acquit; and that a critic, who sets up to read only for an occasion of censure and reproof is a creature as barbarous as a judge who should take up a resolution to hang all men that came before him upon a trial.

Again, by the word critic have been meant the restorers of ancient learning from the worms, and graves, and dust of manuscripts.

Now the races of those two have been for some ages utterly extinct; and besides, to discourse any farther of them would not be at all to my purpose.

The third and noblest sort is that of the TRUE CRITIC, whose original is the most ancient of all. Every true critic is a hero born, descending in a direct line from a celestial stem by Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, who begat Tigellius, who begat Etcætera the elder; who begat Bentley, and Rymer, and Wotton, and Perrault, and Dennis; who begat Etcætera the younger.

And these are the critics from whom the commonwealth of learning has in all ages received such immense benefits, that the gratitude of their admirers placed their origin in Heaven, among those of Hercules, Theseus, Perseus, and other great deservers of mankind. But heroic virtue itself has not been exempt from the obloquy of evil tongues. For it has been objected that those ancient heroes, famous for their combating so many giants, and dragons, and robbers, were in their own persons a greater nuisance to mankind than any of those monsters they subdued; and therefore, to render their obligations more complete, when all other vermin were destroyed, should, in conscience, have concluded with the same justice upon themselves. As Hercules most generously did, and upon that score procured to himself more temples and votaries than the best of his fellows. For these reasons I suppose it is why some have conceived it would be very expedient for the public good of learning that every true critic, as soon as he had finished his task assigned, should immediately deliver himself up to ratsbane, or hemp, or leap from some convenient altitude; and that no man's pretensions to so illustrious a character should by any means be received before that operation were performed.

Now, from this heavenly descent of criticism, and the close analogy it bears to heroic virtue, it is easy to assign the proper employment of a true ancient genuine critic, which is, to travel through this vast world of writings; to pursue and hunt those monstrous faults bred within them; to drag out the lurking errors, like Cacus from his den; to multiply them like Hydra's heads; and rake them together like Augeas's dung: or else drive away a sort of dangerous fowl, who have a perverse inclination to plunder the best branches of the tree of knowledge, like those stymphalian birds that eat up the fruit.

These reasonings will furnish us with an adequate definition of a true critic: that he is discoverer and collector of writers' faults; which may be farther put beyond dispute by the following demonstration; that whoever will examine the writings in all kinds, wherewith this ancient sect has honoured the world, shall immediately find, from the whole thread and tenor of them, that the ideas of the authors have been altogether conversant and taken up with the faults, and blemishes, and oversights, and mistakes of other writers: and, let the subject treated on be whatever it will, their imaginations are so entirely possessed and replete with the defects of other pens, that the very quintessence of what is bad does of necessity distil into their own; by which means the whole appears to be nothing else but an abstract of the criticisms themselves have made.

Having thus briefly considered the original and office of a critic, as the word is understood in its most noble and universal acceptation, I proceed to refute the objections of those who argue from the silence and pretermission of authors; by which they pretend to prove that the very art of criticism, as now exercised, and by me explained, is wholly modern; and consequently that the critics of Great

Britain and France have no title to an original so ancient and illustrious as I have deduced. Now, if I can clearly make out, on the contrary, that the ancient writers have particularly described both the person and the office of a true critic, agreeably to the definition laid down by me, their grand objection, from the silence of authors, will fall to the ground.

I confess to have, for a long time, borne a part in this general error: from which I should never have acquitted myself, but through the assistance of our noble moderns! whose most edifying volumes I turn undefatigably over night and day for the improvement of my mind and the good of my country: these have, with unwearied pains, made many useful searches into the weak sides of the ancients, and given us a comprehensive list of them. Besides, they have proved beyond contradiction that the very finest things delivered of old have been long since invented and brought to light by much later pens; and that the noblest discoveries those ancients ever made, of art or of nature, have all been produced by the transcending genius of the present age. Which clearly shows how little merit those ancients can justly pretend to, and takes off that blind admiration paid them by men in a corner who have the unhappiness of conversing too little with present things. Reflecting maturely upon all this, and taking in the whole compass of human nature, I easily concluded that these ancients, highly sensible of their many imperfections, must needs have endeavoured, from some passages in their works, to obviate, soften, or divert the censorious reader, by satire or panegyric upon the true critics, in imitation of their masters, the moderns. Now, in the commonplaces of both these I was plentifully instructed by a long course of useful study in prefaces and prologues; and therefore immediately

resolved to try what I could discover of either by a diligent perusal of the most ancient writers, and especially those who treated of the earliest times. Here I found to my great surprise, that although they all entered, upon occasion, into particular descriptions of the true critic, according as they were governed by their fears or their hopes, yet whatever they touched of that kind was with abundance of caution, adventuring no further than mythology and hieroglyphic. This, I suppose, gave ground to superficial readers for urging the silence of authors against the antiquity of the true critic, though the types are so opposite, and the applications so necessary and natural, that it is not easy to conceive how any reader of a modern eye and taste could overlook them. I shall venture from a great number to produce a few, which, I am very confident, will put this question beyond dispute.

It well deserves considering that these ancient writers, in treating enigmatically upon this subject, have generally fixed upon the very same hieroglyph, varying only the story, according to their affections or their wit. For first; Pausanias is of opinion that the perfection of writing correct was entirely owing to the institution of critics; and that he can possibly mean no other than the true critic is, I think, manifest enough from the following description. He says, they were a race of men who delighted to nibble at the superfluities and excrescencies of books, which the learned at length observing, took warning, of their own accord, to lop the luxuriant, the rotten, the dead, the sapless, and the overgrown branches from their works. But now all this he cunningly shades under the following allegory; that the Nauplians in Argos learned the art of pruning their vines, by observing, that when an ASS had browsed upon one of them, it thrived the better and bore

fairer fruit. But Herodotus, holding the very same heiroglyph, speaks much plainer, and almost *in terminis*. He has been so bold as to tax the true critics of ignorance and malice; telling us openly, for I think nothing can be plainer, that in the western part of Lybia there were ASSES with horns: upon which relation Ctesias yet refines, mentioning the very same animal about India, adding that, whereas all other ASSES wanted a gall, these horned ones were so redundant in that part, that their flesh was not to be eaten, because of its extreme bitterness.

Now, the reason why those ancient writers treated this subject only by types and figures was, because they durst not make open attacks against a party so potent and so terrible as the critics of those ages were; whose very voice was so dreadful that a legion of authors would tremble and drop their pens at the sound; for so Herodotus tells us expressly in another place, how a vast army of Scythians was put to flight in a panic terror by the braying of an ASS. From hence it is conjectured by certain profound philologers that the great awe and reverence paid to a true critic by the writers of Britain have been derived to us from those our Scythian ancestors. In short, this dread was so universal, that in process of time those authors who had a mind to publish their sentiments more freely, in describing the true critics of their several ages, were forced to leave off the use of the former hieroglyph, as too nearly approaching the prototype, and invented other terms instead thereof, that were more cautious and mystical: so, Diodorus, speaking to the same purpose, ventures no farther than to say that in the mountains of Helicon there grows a certain weed which bears a flower of so damned a scent as to poison those who offer to smell it. Lucretius gives exactly the same relation:—

> "Est etiam in magnis Heliconis montibus arbos,
> Floris odore hominem tetro consueta necare."
>
> —*Lib.* 6.

But Ctesias, whom we recently quoted, has been a great deal bolder; he had been used with much severity by the true critics of his own age, and therefore could not forbear to leave behind him at least one deep mark of his vengeance against the whole tribe. His meaning is so near the surface, that I wonder how it possibly came to be overlooked by those who deny the antiquity of the true critics. For, pretending to make a description of many strange animals about India, he has set down these remarkable words: Among the rest, says he, there is a serpent that wants teeth, and consequently cannot bite; but if its vomit, to which it is much addicted, happens to fall upon anything, a certain rottenness or corruption ensues: these serpents are generally found among the mountains where jewels grow, and they frequently emit a poisonous juice: whereof whoever drinks, that person's brains fly out of his nostrils.

There was also among the ancients a sort of critics, not distinguished in species from the former, but in growth or degree, who seem to have been only the tyros or junior scholars; yet, because of their differing employments, they are frequently mentioned as a sect by themselves. The usual exercise of these younger students was to attend constantly at theatres, and learn to spy out the worst parts of the play, whereof they were obliged carefully to take note and render a rational account to their tutors. Fleshed at these smaller sports, like young wolves, they grew up in time to be nimble and strong enough for hunting down large game. For it has been observed, both among ancients and moderns, that a true critic has one quality in common with a whore and an alderman, never to change his title or

his nature; that a grey critic has been certainly a green one, the perfections and acquirements of his age being only the improved talents of his youth; like hemp, which some naturalists inform us is bad for suffocations, though taken but in the seed. I esteem the invention, or at least the refinement of prologues, to have been owing to these younger proficients, of whom Terence makes frequent and honourable mention, under the name of *malevoli*.

Now, it is certain the institution of the true critics was of absolute necessity to the commonwealth of learning. For all human actions seem to be divided, like Themistocles and his company; one man can fiddle, and another can make a small town a great city; and he that cannot do either one or the other deserves to be kicked out of the creation. The avoiding of which penalty has doubtless given the first birth to the nation of critics; and withal, an occasion for their secret detractors to report that a true critic is a sort of mechanic, set up with a stock and tools for his trade at as little expense as a tailor; and that there is much analogy between the utensils and abilities of both: that the tailor's hell is the type of a critic's common-place book, and his wit and learning held forth by the goose; that it requires at least as many of these to the making up of one scholar, as of the others to the composition of a man; that the valour of both is equal, and their weapons nearly of a size. Much may be said in answer to those invidious reflections; and I can positively affirm the first to be a falsehood: for, on the contrary, nothing is more certain than that it requires greater layings out to be free of the critic's company than of any other you can name. For as, to be a true beggar, it will cost the richest candidate every groat he is worth; so, before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind;

which, perhaps for a less purchase, would be thought but an indifferent bargain.

Having thus amply proved the antiquity of criticism, and described the primitive state of it, I shall now examine the present condition of this empire, and show how well it agrees with its ancient self. A certain author, whose works have many ages since been entirely lost, does, in his fifth book and eighth chapter, say of critics that their writings are the mirrors of learning. This I understand in a literal sense, and suppose our author must mean, that whoever designs to be a perfect writer must inspect into the books of critics, and correct his invention there, as in a mirror. Now, whoever considers that the mirrors of the ancients were made of brass, and the *sine mercurio*, may presently apply the two principal qualifications of a true modern critic, and consequently must needs conclude that these have always been, and must be for ever, the same. For brass is an emblem of duration, and, when it is skilfully burnished, will cast reflection from its own superficies, without any assistance of mercury from behind. All the other talents of a critic will not require a particular mention, being included or easily deducible to these. However, I shall conclude with three maxims, which may serve both as characteristics to distinguish a true modern critic from a pretender, and will be also of admirable use to those worthy spirits who engage in so useful and honourable an art.

The first is, that criticism, contrary to all other faculties of the intellect, is ever held the truest and best when it is the very first result of the critic's mind; as fowlers reckon the first aim for the surest, and seldom fail of missing the mark if they stay not for a second. Secondly, the true critics are known by their talent of swarming about the

noblest writers, to which they are carried merely by instinct, as a rat to the best cheese, or as a wasp to the fairest fruit. So when the king is on horseback, he is sure to be the dirtiest person of the company; and they that make their court best are such as bespatter him most.

Lastly, a true critic, in the perusal of a book, is like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away, and consequently is apt to snarl most when there are the fewest bones.

Thus much, I think, is sufficient to serve by way of address to my patrons, the true modern critics; and may very well atone for my past silence, as well as that which I am likely to observe for the future. I hope I have deserved so well of their whole body as to meet with generous and tender usage at their hands. Supported by which expectation, I go on boldly to pursue those adventures already so happily begun.

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## SECTION IV.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

I HAVE now, with much pains and study, conducted the reader to a period where he must expect to hear of great revolutions. For no sooner had our learned brother, so often mentioned, got a warm house of his own over his head than he began to look big and to take mightily upon him; insomuch that, unless the gentle reader, out of his great candour, will please a little to exalt his idea, I am afraid he will henceforth hardly know the hero of the play when he happens to meet him; his part, his dress, and his mien being so much altered.

He told his brothers he would have them to know that he was their elder, and consequently his father's sole heir; nay, a while after, he would not allow them to call him brother, but *Mr.* PETER, and then he must be styled *Father* PETER; and sometimes, *My Lord* PETER. To support this grandeur, which he soon began to consider could not be maintained without a better *fonde* than what he was born to, after much thought, he cast about at last to turn projector and virtuoso, wherein he so well succeeded, that many famous discoveries, projects, and machines, which bear great vogue and practice at present in the world, are owing entirely to lord PETER'S invention. I will deduce the best account I have been able to collect of the chief among them, without considering much the order they came out in; because I think authors are not well agreed as to that point.

I hope, when this treatise of mine shall be translated into foreign languages (as I may without vanity affirm that the labour of collecting, the faithfulness in recounting, and the great usefulness of the matter to the public, will amply deserve that justice), that the worthy members of the several academies abroad, especially those of France and Italy, will favourably accept these humble offers for the advancement of universal knowledge. I do also advertise the most reverend fathers, the Eastern missionaries, that I have, purely for their sakes, made use of such words and phrases as will best admit an easy turn into any of the oriental languages, especially the Chinese. And so I proceed with great content of mind, upon reflecting how much emolument this whole globe of the earth is likely to reap by my labours.

The first undertaking of lord Peter was, to purchase a large continent, lately said to have been discovered in *terra*

*australis incognita.* This tract of land he bought at a very great pennyworth from the discoverers themselves (though some pretended to doubt whether they had ever been there), and then retailed it into several cantons to certain dealers, who carried over colonies, but were all shipwrecked in the voyage. Upon which lord Peter sold the said continent to other customers again, and again, and again, and again, with the same success.

The second project I shall mention was his sovereign remedy for the worms, especially those in the spleen. The patient was to eat nothing after supper for three nights: as soon as he went to bed he was carefully to lie on one side, and when he grew weary to turn upon the other; he must also duly confine his two eyes to the same object; and by no means break wind at both ends together without manifest occasion. These prescriptions diligently observed, the worms would void insensibly by perspiration, ascending through the brain.

A third invention was the erecting of a whispering-office for the public good and ease of all such as are hypochondriacal or troubled with the colic; as likewise of all eavesdroppers, physicians, midwives, small politicians, friends fallen out, repeating poets, lovers happy or in despair, bawds, privy-counsellors, pages, parasites, and buffoons; in short, of all such as are in danger of bursting with too much wind. An ass's head was placed so conveniently that the party affected might easily with his mouth accost either of the animal's ears; to which he was to apply close for a certain space, and by a fugitive faculty, peculiar to the ears of that animal, receive immediate benefit, either by eructation, or expiration, or evomitation.

Another very beneficial project of lord Peter's was, an office of insurance for tobacco-pipes, martyrs of the modern

zeal, volumes of poetry, shadows, ——, and rivers; that these, nor any of these, shall receive damage by fire. Whence our friendly societies may plainly find themselves to be only transcribers from this original; though the one and the other have been of great benefit to the undertakers, as well as of equal to the public.

Lord PETER was also held the original author of puppets and raree-shows; the great usefulness whereof being so generally known, I shall not enlarge farther upon this particular.

But another discovery, for which he was much renowned, was his famous universal pickle. For, having remarked how your common pickle in use among housewives was of no farther benefit than to preserve dead flesh and certain kinds of vegetables, Peter, with great cost as well as art, had contrived a pickle proper for houses, gardens, towns, men, women, children, and cattle; wherein he could preserve them as sound as insects in amber. Now, this pickle, to the taste, the smell, and the sight, appeared exactly the same with what is in common service for beef, and butter, and herrings, and has been often that way applied with great success; but, for its many sovereign virtues, was a quite different thing. For Peter would put in a certain quantity of his powder pimperlimpimp, after which it never failed of success. The operation was performed by spargefaction, in a proper time of the moon. The patient who was to be pickled, if it were a house, would infallibly be preserved from all spiders, rats, and weasels; if the party affected were a dog, he should be exempt from mange, and madness, and hunger. It also infallibly took away all scabs, and lice, and scalled heads from children, never hindering the patient from any duty, either at bed or board.

But of all Peter's rarities he most valued a certain set of bulls, whose race was by great fortune preserved in a lineal descent from those that guarded the golden fleece. Though some, who pretended to observe them curiously, doubted the breed had not been kept entirely chaste, because they had degenerated from their ancestors in some qualities, and had acquired others very extraordinary, by a foreign mixture. The bulls of Colchis are recorded to have brazen feet; but whether it happened by ill pasture and running, by an allay from intervention of other parents, from stolen intrigues; whether a weakness in their progenitors had impaired the seminal virtue, or by a decline necessary through a long course of time, the originals of nature being depraved in these latter sinful ages of the world; whatever was the cause, it is certain that lord Peter's bulls were extremely vitiated by the rust of time in the metal of their feet, which was now sunk into common lead. However, the terrible roaring peculiar to their lineage was preserved; as likewise that faculty of breathing out fire from their nostrils, which, notwithstanding, many of their detractors took to be a feat of art, to be nothing so terrible as it appeared, proceeding only from their usual course of diet, which was of squibs and crackers. However, they had two peculiar marks, which extremely distinguished them from the bulls of Jason, and which I have not met together in the description of any other monster beside that in Horace:

"Varias inducere plumas;"

and

"Atrum desinat in piscem."

For these had fishes' tails, yet upon occasion could outfly any bird in the air. Peter put these bulls upon several employs. Sometimes he would set them a-roaring to fright

naughty boys, and make them quiet. Sometimes he would send them out upon errands of great importance; where, it is wonderful to recount (and perhaps the cautious reader may think much to believe it), an *appetitus sensibilis* deriving itself through the whole family from their noble ancestors, guardians of the golden fleece, they continued so extremely fond of gold, that if Peter sent them abroad, though it were only upon a compliment, they would roar, and spit, and belch, and piss, and fart, and snivel out fire, and keep a perpetual coil, till you flung them a bit of gold; but then, *pulveris exigui jactu*, they would grow calm and quiet as lambs. In short, whether by secret connivance or encouragement from their master, or out of their own liquorish affection to gold, or both, it is certain they were no better than a sort of sturdy, swaggering beggars; and where they could not prevail to get an alms, would make women miscarry, and children fall into fits, who to this very day usually call sprights and hobgoblins by the name of bull-beggars. They grew at last so very troublesome to the neighbourhood, that some gentlemen of the north-west got a parcel of right English bull-dogs, and baited them so terribly that they felt it ever after.

I must needs mention one more of lord Peter's projects, which was very extraordinary, and discovered him to be master of a high reach and profound invention. Whenever it happened that any rogue of Newgate was condemned to be hanged, Peter would offer him a pardon for a certain sum of money; which, when the poor caitiff had made all shifts to scrape up and send, his lordship would return a piece of paper in this form:—

"To all mayors, sheriffs, jailors, constables, bailiffs, hangmen, etc. Whereas we are informed that A. B. remains in the hands of you, or some of you, under the sentence of

death. We will and command you, upon sight hereof, to let the said prisoner depart to his own habitation, whether he stands condemned for murder, sodomy, rape, sacrilege, incest, treason, blasphemy, etc., for which this shall be your sufficient warrant; and if you fail hereof, G— d—mn you and yours to all eternity. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Your most humble

Man's man,

Emperor PETER."

The wretches, trusting to this, lost their lives and money too.

I desire of those whom the learned among posterity will appoint for commentators upon this elaborate treatise, that they will proceed with great caution upon certain dark points, wherein all who are not *verè adepti* may be in danger to form rash and hasty conclusions, especially in some mysterious paragraphs, where certain *arcana* are joined for brevity sake, which in the operation must be divided. And I am certain that future sons of art will return large thanks to my memory for so grateful, so useful an *innuendo*.

It will be no difficult part to persuade the reader that so many worthy discoveries met with great success in the world; though I may justly assure him that I have related much the smallest number; my design having been only to single out such as will be of most benefit for public imitation, or which best served to give some idea of the reach and wit of the inventor. And therefore it need not be wondered at if by this time lord Peter was become exceeding rich: but, alas! he had kept his brain so long and so violently upon the rack, that at last it shook itself, and began to turn round for a little ease. In short, what with

pride, projects, and knavery, poor Peter was grown distracted, and conceived the strangest imaginations in the world. In the height of his fits, as it is usual with those who run mad out of pride, he would call himself God Almighty, and sometimes monarch of the universe. I have seen him (says my author) take three old high-crowned hats, and clap them all on his head three storey high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling-rod in his hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot, and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chaps, and give them a damned kick on the mouth, which has ever since been called a salute. Whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt. Meantime his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time; where his first *boutade* was to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too; and in their stead gave orders to pick up the first three strollers that could be met with in the streets. A while after he nailed up the cellar-door, and would not allow his brothers a drop of drink to their victuals. Dining one day at an alderman's in the city, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren, in the praises of his sirloin of beef. "Beef," said the sage magistrate, "is the king of meat; beef comprehends in it the quintessence of partridge, and quail, and vension, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard." When Peter came home he would needs take the fancy of cooking up this doctrine into use, and apply the precept, in default of a sirloin, to his brown loaf. "Bread," says he, "dear brothers, is the staff of life;

in which bread is contained, inclusive, the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, vension, partridge, plum-pudding, and custard; and, to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm, through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread." Upon the strength of these conclusions, next day at dinner was the brown loaf served up in all the formality of a city feast. "Come, brothers," said Peter, "fall to, and spare not; here is excellent good mutton; or hold, now my hand is in, I will help you." At which word, in much ceremony, with fork and knife, he carves out two good slices of a loaf, and presents each on a plate to his brothers. The elder of the two, not suddenly entering into lord Peter's conceit, began with very civil language to examine the mystery. "My lord," said he, "I doubt, with great submission, there may be some mistake."—"What," says Peter, "you are pleasant; come then, let us hear this jest your head is so big with."—"None in the world, my lord; but, unless I am very much deceived, your lordship was pleased a while ago to let fall a word about mutton, and I would be glad to see it with all my heart."—"How," said Peter, appearing in great surprise, "I do not comprehend this at all." Upon which the younger interposing to set the business aright, "My lord," said he, "my brother, I suppose, is hungry, and longs for the mutton your lordship has promised us to dinner."—"Pray," said Peter, "take me along with you; either you are both mad, or disposed to be merrier than I approve of; if you there do not like your piece I will carve you another; though I should take that to be the choice bit of the whole shoulder."—"What then, my lord," replied the first, "it seems this is a shoulder of mutton

all this while?"—"Pray, sir," says Peter, "eat your victuals, and leave off your impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present:" but the other could not forbear, being over-provoked at the affected seriousness of Peter's countenance: "By G—, my lord," said he, "I can only say, that to my eyes, and fingers, and teeth, and nose, it seems to be nothing but a crust of bread." Upon which the second put in his word: "I never saw a piece of mutton in my life so nearly resembling a slice from a twelvepenny loaf."—"Look ye, gentlemen," cries Peter, in a rage; "to convince you what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant, wilful puppies you are, I will use but this plain argument: by G—, it is true, good, natural mutton as any in Leadenhall-market; and G— confound you both eternally if you offer to believe otherwise." Such a thundering proof as this left no farther room for objection; the two unbelievers began to gather and pocket up their mistake as hastily as they could. "Why, truly," said the first, "upon more mature consideration——" —"Ay," says the other, interrupting him, "now I have thought better on the thing, your lordship seems to have a great deal of reason."—"Very well," said Peter; "here, boy, fill me a beer-glass of claret; here's to you both with all my heart." The two brethren, much delighted to see him so readily appeased, returned their most humble thanks, and said they would be glad to pledge his lordship. "That you shall," said Peter; "I am not a person to refuse you anything that is reasonable: wine, moderately taken, is a cordial; here is a glass a-piece for you; it is true natural juice from the grape, none of your damned vintner's brewings." Having spoke thus, he presented to each of them another large dry crust, bidding them drink it off, and not be bashful, for it would

do them no hurt. The two brothers, after having performed the usual office in such delicate conjunctures, of staring a sufficient period at lord Peter and each other, and finding how matters were likely to go, resolved not to enter on a new dispute, but let him carry the point as he pleased; for he was now got into one of his mad fits, and to argue or expostulate farther would only serve to render him a hundred times more untractable.

I have chosen to relate this worthy matter in all its circumstances, because it gave a principal occasion to that great and famous rupture which happened about the same time among these brethren, and was never afterwards made up. But of that I shall treat at large in another section.

However, it is certain that lord Peter, even in his lucid intervals, was very lewdly given in his common conversation, extremely wilful and positive, and would at any time rather argue to the death than allow himself once to be in an error. Besides, he had an abominable faculty of telling huge palpable lies upon all occasions; and not only swearing to the truth, but cursing the whole company to hell if they pretended to make the least scruple of believing him. One time he swore he had a cow at home which gave as much milk at a meal as would fill three thousand churches; and, what was yet more extraordinary, would never turn sour. Another time he was telling of an old sign-post, that belonged to his father, with nails and timber enough in it to build sixteen large men of war. Talking one day of Chinese waggons, which were made so light as to sail over mountains, "Z—ds," said Peter, "where's the wonder of that? By G—, I saw a large house of lime and stone travel over sea and land (granting that it stopped sometimes to bait) above two thousand

German leagues."* And that which was the good of it, he would swear desperately all the while that he never told a lie in his life; and at every word, "By G—, gentlemen, I tell you nothing but the truth; and the d—l broil them eternally that will not believe me."

In short, Peter grew so scandalous, that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say he was no better than a knave. And his two brothers, long weary of his ill-usage, resolved at last to leave him; but first they humbly desired a copy of their father's will, which had now lain by neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request he called them damned sons of whores, rogues, traitors, and the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the youngsters watched their opportunity, made a shift to come at the will, and took a *copia vera* by which they presently saw how grossly they had been abused; their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded that whatever they got should lie in common among them all. Pursuant to which their next enterprise was to break open the cellar-door, and get a little good drink, to spirit and comfort their hearts. In copying the will they had met another precept against whoring, divorce, and separate maintenance; upon which their next work was to discard their concubines, and send for their wives. While all this was in agitation there enters a solicitor from Newgate, desiring lord Peter would please procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him he was a coxcomb to seek pardons from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client; and discovered all

* The Chapel of Loretto, which travelled from the Holy Land to Italy.—*Hawkesworth.*

the method of that imposture in the same form I delivered it a while ago, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king. In the midst of all this clutter and revolution, in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels, and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses, not very important here to repeat, by main force very fairly kicked them both out of doors, and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this.

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## SECTION V.

### A DIGRESSION IN THE MODERN KIND.

We, whom the world is pleased to honour with the title of modern authors, should never have been able to compass our great design of an everlasting remembrance and never-dying fame, if our endeavours had not been so highly serviceable to the general good of mankind. This, O universe! is the adventurous attempt of me thy secretary;

> "——Quemvis perferre laborem
> Suadet, et inducit noctes vigilare serenas."

To this end I have some time since, with a world of pains and art, dissected the carcase of human nature, and read many useful lectures upon the several parts, both containing and contained: till at last it smelt so strong I could preserve it no longer. Upon which I have been at a great expense to fit up all the bones with exact contexture and in due symmetry; so that I am ready to show a very complete anatomy thereof to all curious gentlemen and others.

But not to digress farther in the midst of a digression, as I have known some authors enclose digressions in one another like a nest of boxes, I do affirm that, having carefully cut up human nature, I have found a very strange, new, and important discovery, that the public good of mankind is performed by two ways, instruction and diversion. And I have farther proved, in my said several readings (which perhaps the world may one day see, if I can prevail on any friend to steal a copy, or on certain gentlemen of my admirers to be very importunate), that as mankind is now disposed, he receives much greater advantage by being diverted than instructed: his epidemical diseases being fastidiosity, amorphy, and oscitation; whereas in the present universal empire of wit and learning, there seems but little matter left for instruction. However, in compliance with a lesson of great age and authority, I have attempted carrying the point in all its heights; and accordingly, throughout this divine treatise, have skilfully kneaded up both together, with a layer of *utile* and a layer of *dulce*.

When I consider how exceedingly our illustrious moderns have eclipsed the weak glimmering lights of the ancients, and turned them out of the road of all fashionable commerce, to a degree that our choice town wits, of most refined accomplishments, are in grave dispute whether there have been ever any ancients or not; in which point we are likely to receive wonderful satisfaction from the most useful labours and lucubrations of that worthy modern, Dr. Bentley: I say, when I consider all this, I cannot but bewail that no famous modern has ever yet attempted a universal system, in a small portable volume, of all things that are to be known, or believed, or imagined, or practised in life. I am, however, forced to acknowledge, that such

an enterprise was thought on some time ago by a great philosopher of O. Brazile.* The method he proposed was, by a certain curious receipt, a nostrum, which, after his untimely death, I found among his papers; and do here, out of my great affection to the modern learned, present them with it, not doubting it may one day encourage some worthy undertaker.

You take fair correct copies, well bound in calf-skin and lettered at the back, of all modern bodies of arts and sciences whatsoever, and in what language you please. These you distil *in balneo Mariæ*, infusing quintessence of poppy Q. S., together with three pints of Lethe, to be had from the apothecaries. You cleanse away carefully the *sordes* and *caput mortuum*, letting all that is volatile evaporate. You preserve only the first running, which is again to be distilled seventeen times, till what remains will amount to about two drachms. This you keep in a glass phial, hermetically sealed, for one-and-twenty days. Then you begin your catholic treatise, taking every morning fasting, first shaking the phial, three drops of this elixir, snuffing it strongly up your nose. It will dilate itself about the brain (where there is any) in fourteen minutes, and you immediately perceive in your head an infinite number of abstracts, summaries, compendiums, extracts, collections, medullas, *excerpta quædams*, *florilegias*, and the like, all disposed into great order, and reducible upon paper.

I must needs own it was by the assistance of this arcanum that I, though otherwise *impar*, have adventured upon so daring an attempt, never achieved or undertaken before, but by a certain author called Homer; in whom, though otherwise a person not without some abilities, and,

* An enchanted island, supposed to be sometimes seen from the Isle of Arran.

for an ancient, of a tolerable genius, I have discovered many gross errors which are not to be forgiven his very ashes, if by chance any of them are left. For whereas we are assured he designed his work for a complete body of all knowledge, human, divine, political, and mechanic, it is manifest he has wholly neglected some, and been very imperfect in the rest. For first of all, as eminent a cabalist as his disciples would represent him, his account of the *opus magnum* is extremely poor and deficient; he seems to have read but very superficially either Sendivogus, Behmen, or Anthroposophia Theomagica. He is also quite mistaken about the *sphœra pyroplastica*, a neglect not to be atoned for; and if the reader will admit so severe a censure, *vix crederem autorem hunc unquam audivisse ignis vocem.* His failings are not less prominent in several parts of the mechanics. For, having read his writings with the utmost application usual among modern wits, I could never yet discover the least direction about the structure of that useful instrument, a save-all; for want of which, if the moderns had not lent their assistance, we might yet have wandered in the dark. But I have still behind a fault far more notorious to tax this author with; I mean his gross ignorance in the common laws of this realm, and in the doctrine as well as discipline of the church of England. A defect indeed, for which both he and all the ancients stand most justly censured by my worthy and ingenious friend Mr. Wotton, Bachelor of Divinity, in his incomparable Treatise of Ancient and Modern Learning: a book never to be sufficiently valued, whether we consider the happy turns and flowings of the author's wit, the great usefulness of his sublime discoveries upon the subject of flies and spittle, or the laborious eloquence of his style. And I cannot forbear doing that author the justice of my public

acknowledgments for the great helps and liftings I had out of his incomparable piece, while I was penning this treatise.

But beside these omissions in Homer already mentioned, the curious reader will also observe several defects in that author's writings, for which he is not altogether so accountable. For whereas every branch of knowledge has received such wonderful acquirements since his age, especially within these last three years, or thereabouts, it is almost impossible he could be so very perfect in modern discoveries as his advocates pretend. We freely acknowledge him to be the inventor of the compass, of gunpowder, and the circulation of the blood: but I challenge any of his admirers to show me in all his writings a complete account of the spleen: does he not also leave us wholly to seek in the art of political wagering? What can be more defective and unsatisfactory than his long dissertation upon tea? And as to his method of salivation without mercury so much celebrated of late, it is, to my own knowledge and experience, a thing very little to be relied on.

It was to supply such momentous defects that I have been prevailed on, after long solicitation, to take pen in hand; and I dare venture to promise, the judicious reader shall find nothing neglected here that can be of use upon any emergency of life. I am confident to have included and exhausted all that human imagination can rise or fall to. Particularly, I recommend to the perusal of the learned certain discoveries that are wholly untouched by others; whereof I shall only mention, among a great many more, my new help for smatterers, or the art of being deep-learned and shallow-read. A curious invention about mouse-traps. A universal rule of reason, or every man his own carver; together with a most useful engine for catching of owls. All which, the judicious reader

will find largely treated on in the several parts of this discourse.

I hold myself obliged to give as much light as is possible into the beauties and excellencies of what I am writing; because it is become the fashion and humour most applauded among the authors of this polite and learned age, when they would correct the ill-nature of critical, or inform the ignorance of courteous readers. Besides, there have been several famous pieces lately published, both in verse and prose, wherein, if the writers had not been pleased, out of their great humanity and affection to the public, to give us a nice detail of the sublime and the admirable they contain, it is a thousand to one whether we should ever have discovered one grain of either. For my own particular, I cannot deny that whatever I have said upon this occasion had been more proper in a preface, and more agreeable to the mode which usually directs it thither. But I here think fit to lay hold on that great and honourable privilege of being the last writer: I claim an absolute authority in right, as the freshest modern, which gives me a despotic power over all authors before me. In the strength of which title I do utterly disapprove and declare against that pernicious custom of making the preface a bill of fare to the book. For I have always looked upon it as a high point of indiscretion in monster-mongers, and other retailers of strange sights, to hang out a fair large picture over the door, drawn after the life, with a most eloquent description underneath: this has saved me many a threepence; for my curiosity was fully satisfied, and I never offered to go in, though often invited by the urging and attending orator, with his last moving and standing piece of rhetoric:—Sir, upon my word we are just going to begin. Such is exactly the fate at this time of prefaces, epistles, advertisements, introduction,

prolegomenas, apparatuses, to the readers. This expedient was admirable at first; our great Dryden has long carried it as far as it would go, and with incredible success. He has often said to me in confidence, that the world would have never suspected him to be so great a poet, if he had not assured them so frequently in his prefaces that it was impossible they could either doubt or forget it. Perhaps it may be so; however, I much fear his instructions have edified out of their place, and taught men to grow wiser in certain points where he never intended they should; for it is lamentable to behold with what a lazy scorn many of the yearning readers of our age do now-a-days twirl over forty or fifty pages of preface and dedication (which is the usual modern stint), as if it were so much Latin. Though it must be also allowed, on the other hand, that a very considerable number is known to proceed critics and wits by reading nothing else. Into which two factions I think all present readers may justly be divided. Now, for myself, I profess to be of the former sort; and therefore, having the modern inclination to expatiate upon the beauty of my own productions, and display the bright parts of my discourse, I thought best to do it in the body of the work; where, as it now lies, it makes a very considerable addition to the bulk of the volume; a circumstance by no means to be neglected by a skilful writer.

Having thus paid my due deference and acknowledgment to an established custom of our newest authors, by a long digression unsought for, and a universal censure unprovoked; by forcing into the light, with much pains and dexterity, my own excellencies and other men's defaults, with great justice to myself and candour to them, I now happily resume my subject, to the infinite satisfaction both of the reader and the author.

## SECTION VI.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

We left lord Peter in open rupture with his two brethren; both for ever discarded from his house, and resigned to the wide world, with little or nothing to trust to. Which are circumstances that render them proper subjects for the charity of a writer's pen to work on; scenes of misery ever affording the fairest harvest for great adventures. And in this the world may perceive the difference between the integrity of a generous author and that of a common friend. The latter is observed to adhere closely in prosperity, but on the decline of fortune to drop suddenly off. Whereas the generous author, just on the contrary, finds his hero on the dunghill, from thence by gradual steps raises him to a throne, and then immediately withdraws, expecting not so much as thanks for his pains; in imitation of which example, I have placed lord Peter in a noble house, given him a title to wear and money to spend. There I shall leave him for some time; returning where common charity directs me, to the assistance of his two brothers at their lowest ebb. However, I shall by no means forget my character of a historian to follow the truth step by step, whatever happens, or wherever it may lead me.

The two exiles, so nearly united in fortune and interest, took a lodging together; where, at their first leisure, they began to reflect on the numberless misfortunes and vexations of their life past, and could not tell on the sudden to what failure in their conduct they ought to impute them; when, after some recollection, they called to mind the copy of their father's will, which they had so happily recovered.

This was immediately produced, and a firm resolution taken between them to alter whatever was already amiss, and reduce all their future measures to the strictest obedience prescribed therein. The main body of the will (as the reader cannot easily have forgot) consisted in certain admirable rules about the wearing of their coats; in the perusal whereof, the two brothers at every period duly comparing the doctrine with the practice, there was never seen a wider difference between two things; horrible downright transgressions of every point. Upon which they both resolved, without farther delay, to fall immediately upon reducing the whole exactly after their father's model.

But here it is good to stop the hasty reader, ever impatient to see the end of an adventure before we writers can duly prepare him for it. I am to record that these two brothers began to be distinguished at this time by certain names. One of them desired to be called MARTIN, and the other took the appellation of JACK. These two had lived in much friendship and agreement under the tyranny of their brother Peter, as it is the talent of fellow-sufferers to do; men in misfortune being like men in the dark, to whom all colours are the same: but when they came forward into the world, and began to display themselves to each other and to the light, their complexions appeared extremely different; which the present posture of their affairs gave them sudden opportunity to discover.

But here the severe reader may justly tax me as a writer of short memory, a deficiency to which a true modern cannot but of necessity be a little subject. Because memory, being an employment of the mind upon things past, is a faculty for which the learned in our illustrious age have no manner of occasion, who deal entirely with invention, and strike all things out of themselves, or at

least by collision from each other: upon which account we think it highly reasonable to produce our great forgetfulness as an argument unanswerable for our great wit. I ought in method to have informed the reader, about fifty pages ago, of a fancy lord Peter took, and infused into his brothers, to wear on their coats whatever trimmings came up in fashion; never pulling off any as they went out of the mode, but keeping on all together, which amounted in time to a medley the most antic you can possibly conceive; and this to a degree, that upon the time of their falling out there was hardly a thread of the original coat to be seen: but an infinite quantity of lace, and ribbons, and fringe, and embroidery, and points; I mean only those tagged with silver, for the rest fell off. Now this material circumstance, having been forgot in due place, as good fortune has ordered, comes in very properly here when the two brothers are just going to reform their vestures into the primitive state prescribed by their father's will.

They both unanimously entered upon this great work, looking sometimes on their coats; and sometimes on the will. Martin laid the first hand; at one twitch brought off a large handful of points; and, with a second pull, stripped away ten dozen yards of fringe. But when he had gone thus far he demurred a while: he knew very well there yet remained a great deal more to be done; however, the first heat being over, his violence began to cool, and he resolved to proceed more moderately in the rest of the work, having already narrowly escaped a swinging rent, in pulling of the points, which, being tagged with silver (as we have observed before), the judicious workman had, with much sagacity, double sewn, to preserve them from falling. Resolving, therefore, to rid his coat of a huge quantity of gold-lace, he picked up the stitches with much caution, and diligently

gleaned out all the loose threads as he went, which proved to be a work of time. Then he fell about the embroidered Indian figures of men, women, and children; against which, as you have heard in its due place, their father's testament was extremely exact and severe; these, with much dexterity and application, were, after a while, quite eradicated or utterly defaced. For the rest, where he observed the embroidery to be worked so close as not to be got away without damaging the cloth, or where it served to hide or strengthen any flaw in the body of the coat, contracted by the perpetual tampering of workmen upon it, he concluded the wisest course was to let it remain, resolving in no case whatsoever that the substance of the stuff should suffer injury; which he thought the best method for serving the true intent and meaning of his father's will. And this is the nearest account I have been able to collect of Martin's proceedings upon this great revolution.

But his brother Jack, whose adventures will be so extraordinary as to furnish a great part in the remainder of this discourse, entered upon the matter with other thoughts and a quite different spirit. For the memory of lord Peter's injuries produced a degree of hatred and spite which had a much greater share of inciting him than any regards after his father's commands; since these appeared, at best, only secondary and subservient to the other. However, for this medley of humour he made a shift to find a plausible name, honouring it with the title of zeal; which is perhaps the most significant word that has been ever yet produced in any language: as I think I have fully proved in my excellent analytical discourse upon that subject; wherein I have deduced a histori-theo-physi-logical account of zeal, showing how it first proceeded from a notion into a word, and thence, in a hot summer, ripened into a tangible

substance. This work, containing three large volumes in folio, I design very shortly to publish by the modern way of subscription, not doubting but the nobility and gentry of the land will give me all possible encouragement; having had already such a taste of what I am able to perform.

I record, therefore, that brother Jack, brimful of this miraculous compound, reflecting with indignation upon Peter's tyranny, and, farther provoked by the despondency of Martin, prefaced his resolutions to this purpose. "What," said he, "a rogue that locked up his drink, turned away our wives, cheated us of our fortunes; palmed his damned crusts upon us for mutton; and at last kicked us out of doors; must we be in his fashions, with a pox! a rascal, besides, that all the street cries out against." Having thus kindled and inflamed himself as high as possible, and by consequence in a delicate temper for beginning a reformation, he set about the work immediately; and in three minutes made more despatch than Martin had done in as many hours. For, courteous reader, you are given to understand that zeal is never so highly obliged as when you set it a-tearing; and Jack, who doted on that quality in himself, allowed it at this time its full swing. Thus it happened that, stripping down a parcel of gold lace a little too hastily, he rent the main body of his coat from top to bottom; and whereas his talent was not of the happiest in taking up a stitch, he knew no better way than to darn it again with packthread and a skewer. But the matter was yet infinitely worse (I record it with tears) when he proceeded to the embroidery: for, being clumsy by nature, and of temper impatient; withal, beholding millions of stitches that required the nicest hand and sedatest constitution to extricate; in a great rage he tore off the whole piece, cloth

and all, and flung it into the kennel, and furiously thus continued his career: "Ah, good brother Martin," said he, "do as I do, for the love of God; strip, tear, pull, rend, flay off all, that we may appear as unlike that rogue Peter as it is possible; I would not for a hundred pounds carry the least mark about me that might give occasion to the neighbours of suspecting that I was related to such a rascal." But Martin, who at this time happened to be extremely phlegmatic and sedate, begged his brother, of all love, not to damage his coat by any means; for he never would get such another: desired him to consider that it was not their business to form their actions by any reflection upon Peter, but by observing the rules prescribed in their father's will. That he should remember Peter was still their brother, whatever faults or injuries he had committed; and therefore they should by all means avoid such a thought as that of taking measures for good and evil from no other rule than of opposition to him. That it was true, the testament of their good father was very exact in what related to the wearing of their coats: yet it was no less penal and strict in prescribing agreement, and friendship, and affection between them. And therefore, if straining a point were at all dispensable, it would certainly be so rather to the advance of unity than increase of contradiction.

MARTIN had still proceeded as gravely as he began, and doubtless would have delivered an admirable lecture of morality, which might have exceedingly contributed to my reader's repose both of body and mind, the true ultimate end of ethics; but Jack was already gone a flight-shot beyond his patience. And as in scholastic disputes nothing serves to rouse the spleen of him that opposes so much as a kind of pedantic affected calmness in the respondent;

disputants being for the most part like unequal scales, where the gravity of one side advances the lightness of the other, and causes it to fly up and kick the beam: so it happened here that the weight of Martin's argument exalted Jack's levity, and made him fly out, and spurn against his brother's moderation. In short, Martin's patience put Jack in a rage; but that which most afflicted him was, to observe his brother's coat so well reduced into the state of innocence; while his own was either wholly rent to his shirt, or those places which had escaped his cruel clutches were still in Peter's livery. So that he looked like a drunken beau, half rifled by bullies; or like a fresh tenant of Newgate, when he has refused the payment of garnish; or like a discovered shoplifter, left to the mercy of Exchange women;* or like a bawd in her old velvet petticoat, resigned into the secular hands of the mobile. Like any, or like all of these, a medley of rags, and lace, and rents, and fringes, unfortunate Jack did now appear: he would have been extremely glad to see his coat in the condition of Martin's, but infinitely gladder to find that of Martin in the same predicament with his. However, since neither of these was likely to come to pass, he thought fit to lend the whole business another turn, and to dress up necessity into a virtue. Therefore, after as many of the fox's arguments as he could muster up, for bringing Martin to reason, as he called it; or, as he meant it, into his own ragged, bobtailed condition; and observing he said all to little purpose; what, alas! was left for the forlorn Jack to do, but, after a million of scurrilities against his brother, to run mad with spleen, and spite, and contradiction. To be short, here began a mortal breach between

* The galleries over the piazzas in the late Royal Exchange were filled with shops, kept chiefly by women.—*Hawkesworth.*

these two. Jack went immediately to new lodgings, and in a few days it was for certain reported that he had run out of his wits. In a short time after he appeared abroad, and confirmed the report by falling into the oddest whimseys that ever a sick brain conceived.

And now the little boys in the streets began to salute him with several names. Sometimes they would call him Jack the bald,* sometimes, Jack with a lantern; sometimes, Dutch Jack;† sometimes, French Hugh;‡ sometimes, Tom the beggar;§ and sometimes, Knocking Jack of the North.‖ And it was under one, or some, or all of these appellations, which I leave the learned reader to determine, that he has given rise to the most illustrious and epidemic sect of Æolists; who, with honourable commemoration, do still acknowledge the renowned JACK for their author and founder. Of whose original, as well as principles, I am now advancing to gratify the world with a very particular account.

"—Melleo contingens cuncta lepore."

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## SECTION VII.

### A DIGRESSION IN PRAISE OF DIGRESSIONS.

I HAVE sometimes heard of an Iliad in a nutshell; but it has been my fortune to have much oftener seen a nutshell in an Iliad. There is no doubt that human life has received most

* Calvin.

† Of Leyden, who gave rise to the Anabaptists. ‡ Huguenots.

§ The Gueuses, by which name some protestants in Flanders were called. ‖ Knox.

wonderful advantages from both; but to which of the two the world is chiefly indebted I shall leave among the curious as a problem worthy of their utmost inquiry. For the invention of the latter I think the commonwealth of learning is chiefly obliged to the great modern improvement of digressions: the late refinements in knowledge running parallel to those of diet in our nation, which, among men of a judicious taste, are dressed up in various compounds, consisting in soups and olios, fricassees and ragouts.

It is true, there is a sort of morose, detracting, ill-bred people, who pretend utterly to disrelish these polite innovations; and as to the similitude from diet, they allow the parallel, but are so bold to pronounce the example itself a corruption and degeneracy of taste. They tell us that the fashion of jumbling fifty things together in a dish was at first introduced, in compliance to a depraved and debauched appetite, as well as to a crazy constitution: and to see a man hunting through an olio, after the head and brains of a goose, a widgeon, or a woodcock, is a sign he wants a stomach and digestion for more substantial victuals. Farther, they affirm that digressions in a book are like foreign troops in a state, which argue the nation to want a heart and hands of its own, and often either subdue the natives, or drive them into the most unfruitful corners.

But, after all that can be objected by these supercilious censors, it is manifest the society of writers would quickly be reduced to a very inconsiderable number if men were put upon making books with the fatal confinement of delivering nothing beyond what is to the purpose. It is acknowledged, that were the case the same among us as with the Greeks and Romans, when learning was in its cradle, to be reared and fed, and clothed by invention, it would be an easy task to fill up volumes upon particular occasions, without farther

expatiating from the subjects than by moderate excursions, helping to advance or clear the main design. But with knowledge it has fared as with a numerous army, encamped in a fruitful country, which, for a few days, maintains itself by the product of the soil it is on; till provisions being spent, they are sent to forage many a mile, among friends or enemies, it matters not. Meanwhile, the neighbouring fields, trampled and beaten down, become barren and dry, affording no sustenance but clouds of dust.

The whole course of things being thus entirely changed between us and the ancients, and the moderns wisely sensible of it, we of this age have discovered a shorter and more prudent method to become scholars and wits, without the fatigue of reading or of thinking. The most accomplished way of using books at present is two-fold; either, first, to serve them as some men do lords, learn their titles exactly, and then brag of their acquaintance. Or, secondly, which is indeed the choicer, the profounder, and politer method, to get a thorough insight into the index, by which the whole book is governed and turned, like fishes by the tail. For to enter the palace of learning at the great gate requires an expense of time and forms; therefore men of much haste and little ceremony are content to get in by the back door. For the arts are all in flying march, and therefore more easily subdued by attacking them in the rear. Thus physicians discover the state of the whole body by consulting only what comes from behind. Thus men catch knowledge by throwing their wit into the posteriors of a book, as boys do sparrows with flinging salt upon their tails. Thus human life is best understood by the wise man's rule of regarding the end. Thus are the sciences found, like Hercules's oxen, by tracing them backwards. Thus are old sciences unravelled, like old stockings, by beginning at the

foot. Beside all this, the army of the sciences has been of late, with a world of martial discipline, drawn into its close order, so that a view or a muster may be taken of it with abundance of expedition. For this great blessing we are wholly indebted to systems and abstracts, in which the modern fathers of learning, like prudent usurers, spent their sweat for the ease of us their children. For labour is the seed of idleness, and it is the peculiar happiness of our noble age to gather the fruit.

Now, the method of growing wise, learned, and sublime, having become so regular an affair, and so established in all its forms, the number of writers must needs have increased accordingly, and to a pitch that has made it of absolute necessity for them to interfere continually with each other. Besides, it is reckoned that there is not at this present a sufficient quantity of new matter left in nature to furnish and adorn any one particular subject to the extent of a volume. This I am told by a very skilful computer, who has given a full demonstration of it from rules of arithmetic.

This perhaps may be objected against by those who maintain the infinity of matter, and therefore will not allow that any species of it can be exhausted. For answer to which, let us examine the noblest branch of modern wit or invention, planted and cultivated by the present age, and which, of all others, has borne the most and the fairest fruit. For, though some remains of it were left us by the ancients, yet have not any of those, as I remember, been translated or compiled into systems for modern use. Therefore we may affirm, to our own honour, that it has, in some sort, been both invented and brought to perfection by the same hands. What I mean is, that highly celebrated talent among the modern wits of deducing similitudes, allusions,

and applications, very surprising, agreeable, and apposite, from the *pudenda* of either sex, together with their proper uses. And truly, having observed how little invention bears any vogue, beside what is derived into these channels, I have sometimes had a thought that the happy genius of our age and country was prophetically held forth by that ancient typical description of the Indian pigmies, whose stature did not exceed above two foot; *sed quorum pudenda crassa, et ad talos usque pertingentia.* Now I have been very curious to inspect the late productions wherein the beauties of this kind have most prominently appeared; and although this vein has bled so freely, and all endeavours have been used in the power of human breath to dilate, extend, and keep it open, like the Scythians, who had a custom, and an instrument, to blow up the privities of their mares, that they might yield the more milk; yet I am under an apprehension it is near growing dry and past all recovery; and that either some new *fonde* of wit should, if possible, be provided, or else that we must even be content with repetition here, as well as upon all other occasions.

This will stand as an incontestable argument that our modern wits are not to reckon upon the infinity of matter for a constant supply. What remains, therefore, but that our last recourse must be had to large indexes and little compendiums? quotations must be plentifully gathered, and booked in alphabet; to this end, though authors need be little consulted, yet critics, and commentators, and lexicons, carefully must. But above all, those judicious collectors of bright parts, and flowers, and observandas, are to be nicely dwelt on by some called the sieves and boulters of learning; though it is left undetermined whether they dealt in pearls or meal; and, consequently, whether we are more to value that which passed through, or what staid behind.

By these methods, in a few weeks there starts up many a writer capable of managing the profoundest and most universal subjects. For what though his head be empty, provided his commonplace-book be full? and if you will bate him but the circumstances of method, and style, and grammar, and invention; allow him but the common privileges of transcribing from others, and digressing from himself, as often as he shall see occasion; he will desire no more ingredients towards fitting up a treatise that shall make a very comely figure on a bookseller's shelf; there to be preserved neat and clean for a long eternity, adorned with the heraldry of its title fairly inscribed on a label; never to be thumbed or greased by students, nor bound to everlasting chains of darkness in a library: but when the fulness of time is come, shall happily undergo the trial of purgatory, in order to ascend the sky.

Without these allowances, how is it possible we modern wits should ever have an opportunity to introduce our collections, listed under so many thousand heads of a different nature; for want of which the learned world would be deprived of infinite delight, as well as instruction, and we ourselves buried beyond redress in an inglorious and undistinguished oblivion?

From such elements as these I am alive to behold the day wherein the corporation of authors can outvie all its brethren in the guild. A happiness derived to us, with a great many others, from our Scythian ancestors; among whom the number of pens was so infinite, that the Grecian eloquence had no other way of expressing it than by saying that in the regions far to the north it was hardly possible for a man to travel, the very air was so replete with feathers.

The necessity of this digression will easily excuse the

length; and I have chosen for it as proper a place as I could readily find. If the judicious reader can assign a fitter, I do here empower him to remove it into any other corner he pleases. And so I return with great alacrity, to pursue a more important concern.

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## SECTION VIII.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

THE learned Æolists maintain the original cause of all things to be wind, from which principle this whole universe was at first produced, and into which it must at last be resolved; that the same breath which had kindled and blew up the flame of nature should one day blow it out—

"Quod procul a nobis flectat fortuna gubernans."

This is what the *adepti* understand by their *anima mundi;* that is to say, the spirit, or breath, or wind of the world; for, examine the whole system by the particulars of nature, and you will find it not to be disputed. For whether you please to call the *forma informans* of man by the name of *spiritus*, *animus*, *afflatus*, or *anima;* what are all these but several appellations for wind, which is the ruling element in every compound, and into which they all resolve upon their corruption? Farther, what is life itself but, as it is commonly called, the breath of our nostrils? Whence it is very justly observed by naturalists that wind still continues of great emolument in certain mysteries not to be named, giving occasion for those happy epithets of *turgidus* and *inflatus*, applied either to the *emittent* or *recipient* organs.

By what I have gathered out of ancient records, I find the compass of their doctrine took in two-and-thirty points, wherein it would be tedious to be very particular. However, a few of their most important precepts, deducible from it, are by no means to be omitted; among which the following maxim was of much weight; that since wind had the master share, as well as operation, in every compound, by consequence, those beings must be of chief excellence wherein that *primordium* appears most prominently to abound; and therefore man is in the highest perfection of all created things, as having, by the great bounty of philosophers, been endued with three distinct *animas* or winds, to which the sage Æolists, with much liberality, have added a fourth, of equal necessity as well as ornament with the other three; by this *quartum principium* taking in the four corners of the world; which gave occasion to that renowned *cabalist*, *Bumbastus*,* of placing the body of a man in due position to the four cardinal points.

In consequence of this, their next principle was, that man brings with him into the world a peculiar portion or grain of wind, which may be called a *quinta essentia*, extracted from the other four. This quintessence is of a catholic use upon all emergencies of life, is improvable into all arts and sciences, and may be wonderfully refined, as well as enlarged, by certain methods in education. This, when blown up to its perfection, ought not to be covetously hoarded up, stifled, or hid under a bushel, but freely communicated to mankind. Upon these reasons, and others of equal weight, the wise Æolists affirm the gift of belching to be the noblest act of a rational creature. To cultivate which art, and render it more serviceable to mankind, they

* One of the names of Paracelsus. He was called Christophorus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bumbastus.

made use of several methods. At certain seasons of the year you might behold the priests among them, in vast numbers, with their mouths gaping wide against a storm. At other times were to be seen several hundreds linked together in a circular chain, with every man a pair of bellows applied to his neighbour's breech, by which they blew up each other to the shape and size of a tun; and for that reason, with great propriety of speech, did usually call their bodies their vessels. When, by these and the like performances, they were grown sufficiently replete, they would immediately depart, and disembogue, for the public good, a plentiful share of their acquirements into their disciples' chaps. For we must here observe that all learning was esteemed among them to be compounded from the same principle. Because, first, it is generally affirmed, or confessed, that learning puffeth men up: and, secondly, they proved it by the following syllogism: Words are but wind; and learning is nothing but words; *ergo*, learning is nothing but wind. For this reason, the philosophers among them did, in their schools, deliver to their pupils all their doctrines and opinions by eructation, wherein they had acquired a wonderful eloquence, and of incredible variety. But the great characteristic by which their chief sages were best distinguished was a certain position of countenance, which gave undoubted intelligence to what degree or proportion the spirit agitated the inward mass. For, after certain gripings, the wind and vapours issuing forth, having first, by their turbulence and convulsions within, caused an earthquake in man's little world, distorted the mouth, bloated the cheeks, and given the eyes a terrible kind of relievo; at such junctures all their belches were received for sacred, the sourer the better, and swallowed with infinite consolation by their meagre devotees. And, to

render these yet more complete, because the breath of man's life is in his nostrils, therefore the choicest, most edifying, and most enlivening belches, were very wisely conveyed through that vehicle, to give them a tincture as they passed.

Their gods were the four winds, whom they worshipped as the spirits that pervade and enliven the universe, and as those from whom alone all inspiration can properly be said to proceed. However, the chief of these, to whom they performed the adoration of *latria*, was the almighty North, an ancient deity, whom the inhabitants of Megalopolis, in Greece, had likewise in the highest reverence: *omnium deorum Boream maxime celebrant.* This god, though endued with ubiquity, was yet supposed, by the profounder Æolists, to possess one peculiar habitation, or (to speak in form) a *cœlum empyræum*, wherein he was more intimately present. This was situated in a certain region, well known to the ancient Greeks, by them called Σκοτία, or the land of darkness. And although many controversies have arisen upon that matter, yet so much is undisputed, that from a region of the like denomination the most refined Æolists have borrowed their original; whence, in every age, the zealous among their priesthood have brought over their choicest inspiration, fetching it with their own hands from the fountain-head in certain bladders, and disploding it among the sectaries in all nations, who did, and do, and ever will, daily gasp and pant after it.

Now, their mysteries and rites were performed in this manner. It is well known among the learned that the virtuosoes of former ages had a contrivance for carrying and preserving winds in casks or barrels, which was of great assistance upon long sea-voyages: and the loss of so useful an art at present is very much to be lamented;

although, I know not how, with great negligence omitted by Pancirolus. It was an invention ascribed to Æolus himself, from whom this sect is denominated; and who, in honour of their founder's memory, have to this day preserved great numbers of those barrels, whereof they fix one in each of their temples, first beating out the top; into this barrel, upon solemn days, the priest enters; where, having before duly prepared himself by the methods already described, a secret funnel is also conveyed from his posteriors to the bottom of the barrel, which admits new supplies of inspiration from a northern chink or cranny. Whereupon, you behold him swell immediately to the shape and size of his vessel. In this posture he disembogues whole tempests upon his auditory, as the spirit from beneath gives him utterance; which, issuing *ex adytis et penetralibus*, is not performed without much pain and gripings. And the wind, in breaking forth, deals with his face as it does with that of the sea, first blackening, then wrinkling, and at last bursting it into a foam. It is in this guise the sacred Æolist delivers his oracular belches to his panting disciples; of whom, some are greedily gaping after the sanctified breath; others are all the while hymning out the praises of the winds; and, gently wafted to and fro by their own humming, do thus represent the soft breezes of their deities appeased.

It is from this custom of the priests that some authors maintain these Æolists to have been very ancient in the world. Because the delivery of their mysteries, which I have just now mentioned, appears exactly the same with that of other ancient oracles, whose inspirations were owing to certain subterraneous effluviums of wind, delivered with the same pain to the priest, and much about the same influence on the people. It is true, indeed, that these were

frequently managed and directed by female officers, whose organs were understood to be better disposed for the admission of those oracular gusts, as entering and passing up through a receptacle of greater capacity, and causing also a pruriency by the way, such as, with due management, hath been refined from carnal into a spiritual ecstacy. And, to strengthen this profound conjecture, it is farther insisted, that this custom of female priests is kept up still in certain refined colleges* of our modern Æolists, who are agreed to receive their inspiration, derived through the receptacle aforesaid, like their ancestors the sibyls.

And whereas the mind of a man, when he gives the spur and bridle to his thoughts, does never stop, but naturally sallies out into both extremes, of high and low, of good and evil; his first flight of fancy commonly transports him to ideas of what is most perfect, finished, and exalted; till, having soared out of his own reach and sight, not well perceiving how near the frontiers of height and depth border upon each other; with the same course and wing he falls down plumb into the lowest bottom of things; like one who travels the east into the west; or like a straight line drawn by its own length into a circle. Whether a tincture of malice in our natures makes us fond of furnishing every bright idea with its reverse; or whether reason, reflecting upon the sum of things, can, like the sun, serve only to enlighten one-half of the globe, leaving the other half by necessity under shade and darkness; or whether fancy, flying up to the imagination of what is highest and best, becomes overshot, and spent, and weary, and suddenly falls, like a dead bird of paradise, to the ground; or whether, after all these metaphysical conjectures, I have not entirely missed the true reason; the proposition, however, which

* The Quakers.

has stood me in so much circumstance, is altogether true; that as the most uncivilised parts of mankind have some way or other climbed up into the conception of a god or supreme power, so they have seldom forgot to provide their fears with certain ghastly notions, which, instead of better, have served them pretty tolerably for a devil. And this proceeding seems to be natural enough; for it is with men, whose imaginations are lifted up very high, after the same rate as with those whose bodies are so; that, as they are delighted with the advantage of a nearer contemplation upwards, so they are equally terrified with the dismal prospect of a precipice below. Thus, in the choice of a devil it has been the usual method of mankind to single out some being, either in act or in vision, which was in most antipathy to the god they had framed. Thus also the sect of Æolists possessed themselves with a dread and horror and hatred of two malignant natures, betwixt whom and the deities they adored perpetual enmity was established. The first of these was the chameleon, sworn foe to inspiration, who in scorn devoured large influences of their god, without refunding the smallest blast by eructation. The other was a huge terrible monster, called Moulinavent, who, with four strong arms, waged eternal battle with all their divinities, dexterously turning to avoid their blows, and repay them with interest.

Thus furnished and set out with gods, as well as devils, was the renowned sect of Æolists, which makes at this day so illustrious a figure in the world, and whereof that polite nation of Lalpanders are, beyond all doubt, a most authentic branch; of whom I therefore cannot, without injustice, here omit to make honourable mention; since they appear to be so closely allied in point of interest, as well as inclinations, with their brother Æolists among us, as not only to

buy their winds by wholesale from the same merchants, but also to retail them after the same rate and method, and to customers much alike.

Now, whether this system here delivered was wholly compiled by Jack, or, as some writers believe, rather copied, from the original at Delphos, with certain additions and emendations, suited to the times and circumstances, I shall not absolutely determine. This I may affirm, that Jack gave it at least a new turn, and formed it into the same dress and model as it lies deduced by me.

I have long sought after this opportunity of doing justice to a society of men for whom I have a peculiar honour, and whose opinions, as well as practices, have been extremely misrepresented and traduced by the malice or ignorance of their adversaries. For I think it one of the greatest and best of human actions to remove prejudices, and place things in their truest and fairest light, which I therefore boldly undertake, without any regards of my own, beside the conscience, the honour, and the thanks.

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## SECTION IX.

### A DIGRESSION CONCERNING THE ORIGINAL, THE USE, AND IMPROVEMENT OF MADNESS IN A COMMONWEALTH.

Nor shall it in any ways detract from the just reputation of this famous sect, that its rise and institution are owing to such an author as I have described Jack to be; a person whose intellectuals were overturned, and his brain shaken out of its natural position; which we commonly suppose to be a distemper, and call by the name of madness or phrensy.

For if we take a survey of the greatest actions that have been performed in the world under the influence of single men, which are, the establishment of new empires by conquest, the advance and progress of new schemes in philosophy, and the contriving, as well as the propagating, of new religions; we shall find the authors of them all to have been persons whose natural reason had admitted great revolutions, from their diet, their education, the prevalency of some certain temper, together with the particular influence of air and climate. Besides, there is something individual in human minds, that easily kindles at the accidental approach and collision of certain circumstances, which, though of paltry and mean appearance, do often flame out into the greatest emergencies of life. For great turns are not always given by strong hands, but by lucky adaption, and at proper seasons; and it is of no import where the fire was kindled, if the vapour has once got up into the brain. For the upper region of man is furnished like the middle region of the air; the materials are formed from causes of the widest difference, yet produce at last the same substance and effect. Mists arise from the earth, steams from dunghills, exhalations from the sea, and smoke from fire; yet all clouds are the same in composition as well as consequences, and the fumes issuing from a jakes will furnish as comely and useful a vapour as incense from an altar. Thus far, I suppose, will easily be granted me; and then it will follow that, as the face of nature never produces rain but when it is overcast and disturbed, so human understanding, seated in the brain, must be troubled and overspread by vapours ascending from the lower faculties to water the invention and render it fruitful. Now, although these vapours (as it has been already said) are of as various original as those of the skies,

yet the crops they produce differ both in kind and degree, merely according to the soil. I will produce two instances to prove and explain what I am now advancing.

A certain great prince raised a mighty army, filled his coffers with infinite treasures, provided an invincible fleet, and all this without giving the least part of his design to his greatest ministers or his nearest favourites. Immediately the whole world was armed; the neighbouring crowns in trembling expectations towards what point the storm would burst; the small politicians everywhere forming profound conjectures. Some believed he had laid a scheme for universal monarchy; others, after much insight, determined the matter to be a project for pulling down the pope, and setting up the reformed religion, which had once been his own. Some, again, of a deeper sagacity, sent him into Asia to subdue the Turk and recover Palestine. In the midst of all these projects and preparations, a certain state-surgeon,† gathering the nature of the disease by these symptoms, attempted the cure, at one blow performed the operation, broke the bag, and out flew the vapour; nor did anything want to render it a complete remedy, only that the prince unfortunately happened to die in the performance. Now, is the reader exceedingly curious to learn whence this vapour took its rise, which had so long set the nations at a gaze? what secret wheel, what hidden spring, could put into motion so wonderful an engine? It was afterwards discovered that the movement of this whole machine had been directed by an absent female, whose eyes had raised a protuberancy, and, before emission, she was removed into an enemy's country. What should an unhappy prince do in such ticklish circumstances as these? He

* Henry the Great of France.

† Ravillac, who stabbed Henry the Great.

tried in vain the poet's never-failing receipt of *corpora quæque;* for,

> "Idque petit corpus mens unde est saucia amore:
> Unde feritur, eo tendit, gestitque coire."—LUCR.

Having to no purpose used all peaceable endeavours, the collected part of the semen, raised and inflamed, became adust, converted to choler, turned head upon the spinal duct, and ascended to the brain: the very same principle that influences a bully to break the windows of a whore who has jilted him naturally stirs up a great prince to raise mighty armies, and dream of nothing but sieges, battles, and victories.

> "——Teterrima belli
> Causa——"

The other instance is what I have read somewhere in a very ancient author,* of a mighty king, who, for the space of about thirty years, amused himself to take and lose towns; beat armies, and be beaten; drive princes out of their dominions; fright children from their bread and butter; burn, lay waste, plunder, dragoon, massacre subject and stranger, friend and foe, male and female. It is recorded that the philosophers of each country were in grave dispute upon causes, natural, moral and political, to find out where they should assign an original solution of this phenomenon. At last, the vapour or spirit which animated the hero's brain, being in perpetual circulation, seized upon that region of the human body so renowned for furnishing the *zibeta occidentalis*, and, gathering there into a tumour, left the rest of the world for that time in peace. Of such mighty consequence it is where those exhalations fix, and

* Louis XIV. of France.

of so little from whence they proceed. The same spirits which, in their superior progress, would conquer a kingdom, descending upon the anus, conclude in a fistula.

Let us now examine the great introducers of new schemes in philosophy, and search till we can find from what faculty of the soul the disposition arises in mortal man of taking it into his head to advance new systems, with such an eager zeal, in things agreed on all hands impossible to be known: from what seeds this disposition springs, and to what quality of human nature these grand innovators have been indebted for their number of disciples. Because it is plain that several of the chief among them, both ancient and modern, were usually mistaken by their adversaries, and indeed by all except their own followers, to have been persons crazed, or out of their wits; having generally proceeded, in the common course of their words and actions, by a method very different from the vulgar dictates of unrefined reason; agreeing for the most part in their several models with their present undoubted sucessors in the academy of modern Bedlam, whose merits and principles I shall further examine in due place. Of this kind were Epicurus, Diogenes, Apollonius, Lucretius, Paracelsus, Des Cartes, and others; who, if they were now in the world, tied fast, and separate from their followers, would, in this our undistinguishing age, incur manifest danger of phlebotomy, and whips, and chains, and dark chambers, and straw. For what man, in the natural state or course of thinking, did ever conceive it in his power to reduce the notions of all mankind exactly to the same length, and breadth, and height of his own? yet this is the first humble and civil design of all innovators in the empire of reason. Epicurus modestly hoped that, one time or

other, a certain fortuitous concourse of all men's opinions, after perpetual justlings, the sharp with the smooth, the light and the heavy, the round and the square, would, by certain clinamina, unite in the notions of atoms and void, as these did in the originals of all things. Cartesius reckoned to see, before he died, the sentiments of all philosophers, like so many lesser stars in his romantic system, wrapped and drawn within his own vortex. Now, I would gladly be informed how it is possible to account for such imaginations as these in particular men, without recourse to my phenomenon of vapours ascending from the lower faculties to overshadow the brain, and there distilling into conceptions, for which the narrowness of our mother-tongue has not yet assigned any other name beside that of madness or phrensy. Let us therefore now conjecture how it comes to pass that none of these great prescribers do ever fail providing themselves and their notions with a number of implicit disciples. And I think the reason is easy to be assigned; for there is a peculiar string in the harmony of human understanding, which, in several individuals, is exactly of the same tuning. This, if you can dexterously screw up to its right key, and then strike gently upon it, whenever you have the good fortune to light among those of the same pitch, they will, by a secret necessary sympathy, strike exactly at the same time. And in this one circumstance lies all the skill or luck of the matter; for, if you chance to jar the string among those who are either above or below your own height, instead of subscribing to your doctrine, they will tie you fast, call you mad, and feed you with bread and water. It is therefore a point of the nicest conduct to distinguish and adapt this noble talent with respect to the differences of persons and of times. Cicero understood this very well, who, when

writing to a friend in England, with a caution, among other matters, to beware of being cheated by our hackney-coachmen (who, it seems, in those days were as errant rascals as they are now), has these remarkable words: *Est quod gaudeas te in ista loca venisse, ubi aliquid sapere viderere.* For, to speak a bold truth, it is a fatal miscarriage so ill to order affairs as to pass for a fool in one company, when in another you might be treated as a philosopher. Which I desire some certain gentlemen of my acquaintance to lay up in their hearts, as a very seasonable *innuendo.*

This, indeed, was the fatal mistake of that worthy gentleman, my most ingenious friend, Mr. Wotton; a person, in appearance, ordained for greater designs, as well as performances: whether you will consider his notions or his looks, surely no man ever advanced into public with fitter qualifications of body and mind for the propagation of a new religion. O, had those happy talents, missapplied to vain philosophy, been turned into their proper channels of dreams and visions, where distortion of mind and countenance are of such sovereign use, the base detracting world would not then have dared to report that something is amiss, that his brain has undergone an unlucky shake, which even his brother modernists themselves, like ungrates, do whisper so loud, that it reaches up to the very garret I am now writing in!

Lastly, whosoever pleases to look into the fountains of enthusiasm, from whence, in all ages, have eternally proceeded such fattening streams, will find the spring-head to have been as troubled and muddy as the current: of such great emolument is a tincture of this vapour, which the world calls madness, that without its help the world would not only be deprived of these two great blessings,

conquests and systems, but even all mankind would unhappily be reduced to the same belief in things invisible. Now, the former *postulatum* being held that it is of no import from what originals this vapour proceeds, but either in what angles it strikes and spreads over the understanding, or upon what species of brain it ascends; it will be a very delicate point to cut the feather, and divide the several reasons to a nice and curious reader, how this numerical difference in the brain can produce effects of so vast a difference from the same vapour as to be the sole point of individuation between Alexander the Great, Jack of Leyden, and Monsieur des Cartes. The present argument is the most abstracted that ever I engaged in; it strains my faculties to their highest stretch: and I desire the reader to attend with the utmost propensity; for I now proceed to unravel this knotty point.

There is in mankind a certain . . .

. . . . . .

*Hic multa . desiderantur . .*

. . . . . .

And this I take to be a clear solution of the matter.

Having therefore so narrowly passed through this intricate difficulty, the reader will, I am sure, agree with me in the conclusion, that if the moderns mean by madness only a disturbance or transposition of the brain, by force of certain vapours issuing up from the lower faculties, then has this madness been the parent of all those mighty revolutions that have happened in empire, philosophy, and in religion. For the brain in its natural position and state of serenity disposes its owner to pass his life in the common forms, without any thoughts of subduing multitudes to his own power, his reasons, or his vision; and the more he shapes his understanding by the pattern of

human learning, the less he is inclined to form parties after his particular notions, because that instructs him in his private infirmities, as well as in the stubborn ignorance of the people. But when a man's fancy gets astride on his reason; when imagination is at cuffs with the senses; and common understanding, as well as common sense, is kicked out of doors; the first proselyte he makes is himself; and when that is once compassed, the difficulty is not so great in bringing over others; a strong delusion always operating from without as vigorously as from within. For cant and vision are to the ear and the eye the same that tickling is to the touch. Those entertainments and pleasures we most value in life are such as dupe and play the wag with the senses. For if we take an examination of what is generally understood by happiness, as it has respect either to the understanding or the senses, we shall find all its properties and adjuncts will herd under this short definition, that it is a perpetual possession of being well deceived. And first, with relation to the mind or understanding, it is manifest what mighty advantages fiction has over truth; and the reason is just at our elbow, because imagination can build nobler scenes, and produce more wonderful revolutions, than fortune or nature will be at expense to furnish. Nor is mankind so much to blame in his choice thus determining him, if we consider that the debate merely lies between things past and things conceived: and so the question is only this; whether things that have place in the imagination may not as properly be said to exist as those that are seated in the memory; which may be justly held in the affirmative, and very much to the advantage of the former, since this is acknowledged to be the womb of things, and the other allowed to be no more than the grave. Again, if we take this definition of happiness, and examine it with

reference to the senses, it will be acknowledged wonderfully adapt. How fading and insipid do all objects accost us that are not conveyed in the vehicle of delusion! how shrunk is everything as it appears in the glass of nature! so that if it were not for the assistance of artificial mediums, false lights, refracted angles, varnish and tinsel, there would be a mighty level in the felicity of enjoyments of mortal men. If this were seriously considered by the world, as I have a certain reason to suspect it hardly will, men would no longer reckon among their high points of wisdom the art of exposing weak sides and publishing infirmities; an employment, in my opinion, neither better nor worse than that of unmasking, which, I think, has never been allowed fair usage either in the world or the playhouse.

In the proportion that credulity is a more peaceful possession of the mind than curiosity, so far preferable is that wisdom which converses about the surface to that pretended philosophy which enters into the depths of things, and then comes gravely back with informations and discoveries that in the inside they are good for nothing. The two senses to which all objects first address themselves are the sight and the touch; these never examine farther than the colour, the shape, the size, and whatever other qualities dwell or are drawn by art upon the outward of bodies; and then comes reason officiously with tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate that they are not of the same consistence quite through. Now I take all this to be the last degree of perverting nature; one of whose eternal laws it is, to put her best furniture forward. And therefore, in order to save the charges of all such expensive anatomy for the time to come, I do here think fit to inform the reader that in such conclusions as these reason is certainly in the right;

and that, in most corporeal beings which have fallen under my cognizance, the outside has been infinitely preferable to the in: whereof I have been farther convinced from some late experiments. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the carcase of a beau to be stripped in my presence; when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen: but I plainly perceived at every operation, that the farther we proceeded we found the defects increase upon us in number and bulk: from all which, I justly formed this conclusion to myself, that whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to solder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature will deserve much better of mankind, and teach us a more useful science, than that so much in present esteem, of widening and exposing them, like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic. And he whose fortunes and dispositions have placed him in a convenient station to enjoy the fruits of this noble art; he that can, with Epicurus, content his ideas with the films and images that fly off upon his senses from the superficies of things; such a man, truly wise, creams off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined point of felicity, called the possession of being well deceived; the serene, peaceful state of being a fool among knaves.

But to return to madness. It is certain that, according to the system I have above deduced, every species thereof proceeds from a redundancy of vapours; therefore, as some kinds of phrensy give double strength to the sinews, so there are of other species, which add vigour, and life, and spirit to the brain: now, it usually happens that these

active spirits, getting possession of the brain, resemble those that haunt other waste and empty dwellings, which, for want of business, either vanish and carry away a piece of the house, or else stay at home and fling it all out of the windows. By which are mystically displayed the two principal branches of madness, and which some philosophers, not considering so well as I, have mistaken to be different in their causes, over hastily assigning the first to deficiency, and the other to redundance.

I think it therefore manifest, from what I have here advanced, that the main point of skill and address is, to furnish employment for this redundancy of vapour, and prudently to adjust the season of it; by which means it may certainly become of cardinal and catholic emolument in a commonwealth. Thus one man, choosing a proper juncture, leaps into a gulf, thence proceeds a hero, and is called the saviour of his country: another achieves the same enterprise, but, unluckily timing it, has left the brand of madness fixed as a reproach upon his memory: upon so nice a distinction, are we taught to repeat the name of Curtius with reverence and love; that of Empedocles with hatred and contempt. Thus also it is usually conceived that the elder Brutus only personated the fool and madman for the good of the public; but this was nothing else than a redundancy of the same vapour long misapplied, called by Latins *ingenium par negotiis;* or, to translate it as nearly as I can, a sort of phrensy, never in its right element till you take it up in the business of the state.

Upon all which, and many other reasons of equal weight, though not equally curious, I do here gladly embrace an opportunity I have long sought for of recommending it as a very noble undertaking to Sir Edward Seymour, Sir Christopher Musgrave, Sir John Bowles, John Howe, esq.,

and other patriots concerned, that they would move for leave to bring in a bill for appointing commissioners to inspect into Bedlam and the parts adjacent; who shall be empowered to send for persons, papers, and records; to examine into the merits and qualifications of every student and professor; to observe with utmost exactness their several dispositions and behaviour; by which means, duly distinguishing and adapting their talents, they might produce admirable instruments for the several offices in a state, civil and military: proceeding in such methods as I shall here humbly propose. And I hope the gentle reader will give some allowance to my great solicitudes in this important affair, upon account of the high esteem I have borne that honourable society, whereof I had some time the happiness to be an unworthy member.

Is any student tearing his straw in piecemeal, swearing and blaspheming, biting his grate, foaming at the mouth, and emptying his piss-pot in the spectators' faces? let the right worshipful the commissioners of inspection give him a regiment of dragoons, and send him into Flanders among the rest. Is another eternally talking, spluttering, gaping, bawling in a sound without period or article? what wonderful talents are here mislaid! let him be furnished immediately with a green bag and papers, and threepence in his pocket, and away with him to Westminster-Hall. You will find a third gravely taking the dimensions of his kennel; a person of foresight and insight, though kept quite in the dark; for why, like Moses, *ecce cornuta erat ejus facies.* He walks duly in one place, entreats your penny with due gravity and ceremony; talks much of hard times, and taxes, and the whore of Babylon; bars up the wooden window of his cell constantly at eight o'clock; dreams of fire, and shoplifters, and court-customers, and

privileged places. Now, what a figure would all these acquirements amount to if the owner were sent into the city among his brethren! Behold a fourth, in much and deep conversation with himself, biting his thumbs at proper junctures; his countenance checkered with business and design; sometimes walking very fast, with his eyes nailed to a paper that he holds in his hands: a great saver of time, somewhat thick of hearing, very short of sight, but more of memory: a man ever in haste, a great hatcher and breeder of business, and excellent at the famous art of whispering nothing; a huge idolator of monosyllables and procrastination; so ready to give his word to everybody, that he never keeps it: one that has forgot the common meaning of words, but an admirable retainer of the sound: extremely subject to the looseness, for his occasions are perpetually calling him away. If you approach his grate in his familiar intervals; Sir, says he, give me a penny, and I'll sing you a song: but give me the penny first. (Hence comes the common saying, and commoner practice, of parting with money for a song.) What a complete system of court skill is here described in every branch of it, and all utterly lost with wrong application! Accost the hole of another kennel (first stopping you nose), you will behold a surly, gloomy, nasty, slovenly mortal, raking in his own dung, and dabbling in his urine. The best part of his diet is the reversion of his own ordure, which, expiring into steams, whirls perpetually about, and at last reinfunds. His complexion is of a dirty yellow, with a thin scattered beard, exactly agreeable to that of his diet upon its first declination; like other insects, who, having their birth and education in an excrement, from thence borrow their colour and their smell. The student of this apartment is very sparing of his words, but somewhat over-liberal of his

breath: he holds his hand out ready to receive your penny, and immediately upon receipt withdraws to his former occupations. Now, is it not amazing to think the society of Warwick-lane should have no more concern for the recovery of so useful a member, who, if one may judge from these appearances, would become the greatest ornament to that illustrious body? Another student struts up fiercely to your teeth, puffing with his lips, half squeezing out his eyes, and very graciously holds you out his hand to kiss. The keeper desires you not to be afraid of this professor, for he will do you no hurt: to him alone is allowed the liberty of the ante-chamber, and the orator of the place gives you to understand that this solemn person is a tailor run mad with pride. This considerable student is adorned with many other qualities, upon which at present I shall not farther enlarge.——Hark in your ear—I am strangely mistaken if all his address, his motions, and his airs, would not then be very natural, and in their proper element.

I shall not descend so minutely as to insist upon the vast number of beaux, fiddlers, poets, and politicians that the world might recover by such a reformation; but what is more material, beside the clear gain redounding to the commonwealth, by so large an acquisition of persons to employ, whose talents and acquirements, if I may be so bold as to affirm it, are now buried, or at least misapplied; it would be a mighty advantage accruing to the public from this inquiry, that all these would very much excel, and arrive at great perfection in their several kinds; which, I think, is manifest from what I have already shown, and shall enforce by this one plain instance; that even I myself, the author of these momentous truths, am a person whose imaginations are not hard-mouthed and exceedingly disposed

to run away with his reason, which I have observed, from long experience, to be a very light rider, and easily shaken off; upon which account my friends will never trust me alone, without a solemn promise to vent my speculations in this or the like manner, for the universal benefit of humankind; which perhaps the gentle, courteous, and candid reader, brimful of that modern charity and tenderness usually annexed to his office, will be very hardly persuaded to believe.

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## SECTION X.

### A TALE OF A TUB.*

It is an unanswerable argument of a very refined age, the wonderful civilities that have passed of late years between the nation of authors and that of readers. There can hardly pop out a play, a pamphlet, or a poem, without a preface full of acknowledgment to the world for the general reception and applause they have given it, which the Lord knows where, or when, or how, or from whom it received. In due deference to so laudable a custom, I do here return my humble thanks to his majesty and both houses of parliament, to the lords of the king's most honourable privy-council, to the reverend the judges, to the clergy, and gentry, and yeomanry of this land; but in a more especial manner, to my worthy brethren and friends at Will's coffee-house, and Gresham College, and Warwick-lane, and Moorfields, and Scotland Yard, and Westminster-hall, and Guildhall; in short, to all the inhabitants and retainers

* In reality this chapter is not a continuation of the Tale, but a further digression, and it has been so styled by some editors.

whatsoever, either in court, or church, or camp, or city, or country, for their generous and universal acceptance of this divine treatise. I accept their approbation and good opinion with extreme gratitude, and, to the utmost of my poor capacity, shall take hold of all opportunities to return the obligation.

I am also happy that fate has flung me into so blessed an age for the mutual felicity of booksellers and authors, whom I may safely affirm to be at this day the two only satisfied parties in England. Ask an author how his last piece has succeeded; why, truly, he thanks his stars the world has been very favourable, and he has not the least reason to complain: and yet, by G—, he wrote it in a week, at bits and starts, when he could steal an hour from his urgent affairs; as it is a hundred to one, you may see farther in the preface, to which he refers you; and for the rest to the bookseller. There you go as a customer, and make the same question: he blesses his God the thing takes wonderfully, he is just printing the second edition, and has but three left in his shop. You beat down the price: "Sir, we shall not differ;" and, in hopes of your custom another time, lets you have it as reasonable as you please; and "pray send as many of your acquaintance as you will, I shall, upon your account, furnish them all at the same rate."

Now, it is not well enough considered to what accidents and occasions the world is indebted for the greatest part of those noble writings which hourly start up to entertain it. If it were not for a rainy day, a drunken vigil, a fit of the spleen, a course of physic, a sleepy Sunday, an ill run at dice, a long tailor's bill, a beggar's purse, a factious head, a hot sun, costive diet, want of books, and a just contempt of learning: but for these events, I say, and some others

too long to recite (especially a prudent neglect of taking brimstone inwardly), I doubt the number of authors and of writings would dwindle away to a degree most woeful to behold. To confirm this opinion, hear the words of the famous Troglodyte philosopher: It is certain (said he) some grains of folly are of course annexed, as part of the composition of human nature, only the choice is left us, whether we please to wear them inlaid or embossed: and we need not to go very far to seek how that is usually determined, when we remember it is with human faculties as with liquors, the lightest will be ever at the top.

There is in this famous island of Britain a certain paltry scribbler, very voluminous, whose character the reader cannot wholly be a stranger to. He deals in a pernicious kind of writings, called *second parts;* and usually passes under the name of the author of the first. I easily foresee, that as soon as I lay down my pen this nimble operator will have stolen it, and treat me as inhumanly as he has already done Dr. Blackmore, Lestrange, and many others, who shall here be nameless; I therefore fly for justice and relief into the hands of that great rectifier of saddles, and lover of mankind, Dr. Bentley, begging he will take this enormous grievance into his most modern consideration: and if it should so happen that the furniture of an ass, in the shape of second part, must, for my sins, be clapped by a mistake upon my back, that he will immediately please, in the presence of the world, to lighten me of the burden, and take it home to his own house, till the true beast thinks fit to call for it.

In the meantime I do here give this public notice, that my resolutions are to circumscribe within this discourse the whole stock of matter I have been so many years providing. Since my vein is once opened, I am

content to exhaust it all at a running, for the peculiar advantage of my dear country, and for the universal benefit of mankind. Therefore, hospitably considering the number of my guests, they shall have my whole entertainment at a meal; and I scorn to set up the leavings in the cupboard. What the guests cannot eat may be given to the poor; and the dogs under the table may gnaw the bones. This I understand for a more generous proceeding than to turn the company's stomach, by inviting them again to-morrow to a scurvy meal of scraps.

If the reader fairly considers the strength of what I have advanced in the foregoing section, I am convinced it will produce a wonderful revolution in his notions and opinions; and he will be abundantly better prepared to receive and to relish the concluding part of this miraculous treatise. Readers may be divided into three classes—the superficial, the ignorant, and the learned: and I have with much felicity fitted my pen to the genius and advantage of each. The superficial reader will be strangely provoked to laughter; which clears the breast and the lungs, is sovereign against the spleen, and the most innocent of all diuretics. The ignorant reader, between whom and the former the distinction is extremely nice, will find himself disposed to stare; which is an admirable remedy for ill eyes, serves to raise and enliven the spirits, and wonderfully helps perspiration. But the reader truly learned, chiefly for whose benefit I wake when others sleep, and sleep when others wake, will here find sufficient matter to employ his speculations for the rest of his life. It were much to be wished, and I do here humbly propose for an experiment, that every prince in Christendom will take seven of the deepest scholars in his dominions, and shut them up close for seven years in seven chambers, with a command to write seven

ample commentaries on this comprehensive discourse. I shall venture to affirm that, whatever difference may be found in their several conjectures, they will be all, without the least distortion, manifestly deducible from the text. Meantime, it is my earnest request that so useful an undertaking may be entered upon, if their majesties please, with all convenient speed; because I have a strong inclination, before I leave the world, to taste a blessing which we mysterious writers can seldom reach till we have gotten into our graves: whether it is, that fame, being a fruit grafted on the body, can hardly grow, and much less ripen, till the stock is in the earth; or whether she be a bird of prey, and is lured, among the rest, to pursue after the scent of a carcase; or whether she conceives her trumpet sounds best and farthest when she stands on a tomb, by the advantage of a rising ground and the echo of a hollow vault.

It is true, indeed, the republic of dark authors, after they once found out this excellent expedient of dying, have been peculiarly happy in the variety as well as extent of their reputation. For night being the universal mother of things, wise philosophers hold all writings to be fruitful in the proportion that they are dark; and therefore, the true illuminated (that is to say, the darkest of all) have met with such numberless commentators, whose scholastic midwifery has delivered them of meanings that the authors themselves perhaps never conceived, and yet may very justly be allowed the lawful parents of them; the words of such writers being like seed, which, however scattered at random, when they light upon a fruitful ground, will multiply far beyond either the hopes or imagination of the sower.

And therefore, in order to promote so useful a work, I

will here take leave to glance a few innuendoes that may be of great assistance to those sublime spirits who shall be appointed to labour in a universal comment upon this wonderful discourse. And first, I have couched a very profound mystery in the number of O's multiplied by seven and divided by nine. Also, if a devout brother of the rosy cross will pray fervently for sixty-three mornings, with a lively faith, and then transpose certain letters and syllables, according to prescription, in the second and fifth section, they will certainly reveal into a full receipt of the *opus magnum*. Lastly, whoever will be at the pains to calculate the whole number of each letter in this treatise, and sum up the difference exactly between the several numbers, assigning the true natural cause for every such difference, the discoveries in the product will plentifully reward his labour. But then he must beware of Bythus and Sigé, and be sure not to forget the qualities of Achamoth; *à cujus lacrymis humecta prodit substantia, à risu lucida, à tristitia, et à timore mobilis;* wherein Eugenius Philalethes hath committed an unpardonable mistake.

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## SECTION XI.

### A TALE OF A TUB.

After so wide a compass as I have wandered, I do now gladly overtake and close in with my subject, and shall henceforth hold on with it an even pace to the end of my journey, except some beautiful prospect appears within sight of my way; whereof though at present I have neither warning nor expectation, yet upon such an accident, come when it will, I shall beg my reader's favour and company,

allowing me to conduct him through it along with myself. For in writing it is as in travelling; if a man is in haste to be at home (which I acknowledge to be none of my case, having never so little business as when I am there), and his horse be tired with long riding and ill ways, or naturally a jade, I advise him clearly to make the straightest and the commonest road, be it ever so dirty; but then surely we must own such a man to be a scurvy companion at best; he spatters himself and his fellow-travellers at every step; all their thoughts, and wishes, and conversation turn entirely upon the subject of their journey's end; and at every splash, and plunge, and stumble, they heartily wish one another at the devil.

On the other side, when a traveller and his horse are in heart and plight, when his purse is full and the day before him, he takes the road only where it is clean and convenient; entertains his company there as agreeably as he can; but, upon the first occasion, carries them along with him to every delightful scene in view, whether of art, of nature, or of both; and if they chance to refuse, out of stupidity or weariness, let them jog on by themselves and be d——n'd; he'll overtake them at the next town; at which arriving, he rides furiously through; the men, women, and children, run out to gaze; a hundred noisy curs run barking after him, of which, if he honours the boldest with a lash of his whip, it is rather out of sport than revenge; but should some sourer mongrel dare too near an approach, he receives a salute on the chaps by an accidental stroke from the courser's heels, nor is any ground lost by the blow, which sends him yelping and limping home.

I now proceed to sum up the singular adventures of my renowned Jack: the state of whose dispositions and

fortunes the careful reader does, no doubt, most exactly remember, as I last parted with them in the conclusion of a former section. Therefore, his next care must be, from two of the foregoing, to extract a scheme of notions that may best fit his understanding for a true relish of what is to ensue.

JACK had not only calculated the first revolution of his brain so prudently as to give rise to that epidemic sect of Æolists, but succeeding also into a new and strange variety of conceptions, the fruitfulness of his imagination led him into certain notions, which, although in appearance very unaccountable, were not without their mysteries and their meanings, nor wanted followers to countenance and improve them. I shall therefore be extremely careful and exact in recounting such material passages of this nature as I have been able to collect, either from undoubted tradition or indefatigable reading; and shall describe them as graphically as it is possible, and as far as notions of that height and latitude can be brought within the compass of a pen. Nor do I at all question but they will furnish plenty of noble matter for such whose converting imaginations dispose them to reduce all things into types; who can make shadows, no thanks to the sun; and then mould them into substances, no thanks to philosophy; whose peculiar talent lies in fixing tropes and allegories to the letter, and refining what is literal into figure and mystery.

JACK had provided a fair copy of his father's will, engrossed in form upon a large skin of parchment; and resolving to act the part of a most dutiful son, he became the fondest creature of it imaginable. For although, as I have often told the reader, it consisted wholly in certain plain, easy directions, about the management and

wearing of their coats, with legacies, and penalties in case of obedience or neglect, yet he began to entertain a fancy that the matter was deeper and darker, and therefore must needs have a great deal more of mystery at the bottom. "Gentlemen," said he, "I will prove this very skin of parchment to be meat, drink, and cloth, to be the philosopher's stone and the universal medicine." In consequence of which raptures, he resolved to make use of it in the necessary as well as the most paltry occasions of life. He had a way of working it into any shape he pleased; so that it served him for a nightcap when he went to bed, and for an umbrella in rainy weather. He would lap a piece of it about a sore toe, or, when he had fits, burn two inches under his nose; or, if anything lay heavy on his stomach, scrape off and swallow as much of the powder as would lie on a silver penny; they were all infallible remedies. With analogy to these refinements, his common talk and conversation ran wholly in the phrase of his will, and he circumscribed the utmost of his eloquence within that compass, not daring to let slip a syllable without authority from that. Once, at a strange house, he was suddenly taken short upon an urgent juncture, whereon it may not be allowed too particularly to dilate; and being not able to call to mind, with that suddenness the occasion required, an authentic phrase for demanding the way to the back-side, he chose rather, as the most prudent course, to incur the penalty in such cases usually annexed. Neither was it possible for the united rhetoric of mankind to prevail with him to make himself clean again; because, having consulted the will upon this emergency, he met with a passage near the bottom (whether foisted in by the transcriber is not known) which seemed to forbid it.

He made it a part of his religion never to say grace to his meat; nor could all the world persuade him, as the common phrase is, to eat his victuals like a Christian.

He bore a strange kind of appetite to snap-dragon, and to the livid snuffs of a burning candle, which he would catch and swallow with an agility wonderful to conceive; and, by this procedure, maintained a perpetual flame in his belly, which, issuing in a glowing steam from both his eyes, as well as his nostrils and his mouth, made his head appear, in a dark night, like the skull of an ass, wherein a roguish boy had conveyed a farthing candle, to the terror of his majesty's liege subjects. Therefore, he made use of no other expedient to light himself home, but was wont to say that a wise man was his own lantern.

He would shut his eyes as he walked along the streets, and if he happened to bounce his head against a post, or fall into a kennel, as he seldom missed either to do one or both, he would tell the gibing apprentices who looked on that he submitted with entire resignation as to a trip or a blow of fate, with whom he found, by long experience, how vain it was either to wrestle or to cuff; and whoever durst undertake to do either would be sure to come off with a swinging fall or a bloody nose. "It was ordained," said he, "some few days before the creation, that my nose and this very post should have a rencounter; and therefore nature thought fit to send us both into the world in the same age, and to make us countrymen and fellow-citizens. Now, had my eyes been open, it is very likely the business might have been a great deal worse; for how many a confounded slip is daily got by a man with all his foresight about him? Besides, the eyes of the understanding see best when those of the senses are out of the way; and therefore blind men are observed to tread their steps with much more caution,

and conduct, and judgment, than those who rely with too much confidence upon the virtue of the visual nerve, which every little accident shakes out of order, and a drop or a film can wholly disconcert; like a lantern among a pack of roaring bullies when they scour the streets, exposing its owner and itself to outward kicks and buffets, which both might have escaped if the vanity of appearing would have suffered them to walk in the dark. But farther, if we examine the conduct of these boasted lights, it will prove yet a great deal worse than their fortune. It is true, I have broke my nose against this post, because fortune either forgot, or did not think it convenient, to twitch me by the elbow, and give me notice to avoid it. But let not this encourage either the present age or posterity to trust their noses into the keeping of their eyes, which may prove the fairest way of losing them for good and all. For, O ye eyes, ye blind guides; miserable guardians are ye of our frail noses; ye, I say, who fasten upon the first precipice in view, and then tow our wretched willing bodies after you to the very brink of destruction: and alas! that brink is rotten, our feet slip, and we tumble down prone into a gulf, without one hospitable shrub in the way to break the fall; a fall to which not any nose of mortal make is equal, except that of the giant Laurcalco, who was lord of the silver bridge. Most properly, therefore, O eyes, and with great justice, may you be compared to those foolish lights which conduct men through dirt and darkness, till they fall into a deep pit or a noisome bog."

This I have produced as a scantling of Jack's great eloquence, and the force of his reasoning upon such abstruse matters.

He was, besides, a person of great design and improvement in affairs of devotion, having introduced a new deity,

who has since met with a vast number of worshippers; by some called Babel, by others Chaos, who had an ancient temple of Gothic structure upon Salisbury plain, famous for its shrine and celebration by pilgrims.

When he had some roguish trick to play, he would down with his knees, up with his eyes, and fall to prayers, though in the midst of the kennel. Then it was that those who understood his pranks would be sure to get far enough out of his way; and whenever curiosity attracted strangers to laugh or to listen, he would, of a sudden, with one hand, out with his gear and piss full in their eyes, and with the other all bespatter them with mud.

In winter he went always loose and unbuttoned, and clad as thin as possible to let in the ambient heat; and in summer lapped himself close and thick to keep it out.

In all revolutions of government he would make his court for the office of hangman general; and in the exercise of that dignity, wherein he was very dexterous, would make use of no other vizard than a long prayer.

He had a tongue so musculous and subtile, that he could twist it up into his nose, and deliver a strange kind of speech from thence. He was also the first in these kingdoms who began to improve the Spanish accomplishment of braying; and having large ears, perpetually exposed and erected, he carried his art to such a perfection, that it was a point of great difficulty to distinguish, either by the view or the sound, between the original and the copy.

He was troubled with a disease reverse to that called the stinging of the tarantula; and would run dog-mad at the noise of music, especially a pair of bagpipes. But he would cure himself again by taking two or three turns in Westminster-hall, or Billingsgate, or in a boarding-school, or the Royal Exchange, or a state coffee-house.

He was a person that feared no colours, but mortally hated all, and, upon that account, bore a cruel aversion against painters, insomuch that, in his paroxysms, as he walked the streets, he would have his pockets loaden with stones to pelt at the signs.

Having, from this manner of living, frequent occasion to wash himself, he would often leap over head and ears into water, though it were in the midst of the winter, but was always observed to come out again much dirtier, if possible, than he went in.

He was the first that ever found out the secret of contriving a soporiferous medicine to be conveyed in at the ears; it was a compound of sulphur and balm of Gilead, with a little pilgrim's salve.

He wore a large plaster of artificial caustics on his stomach, with the fervour of which he could set himself a-groaning, like the famous board upon application of a red-hot iron.

He would stand in the turning of a street, and, calling to those who passed by, would cry to one, "Worthy sir, do me the honour of a good slap in the chaps." To another, "Honest friend, pray favour me with a handsome kick on the arse: Madam, shall I entreat a small box on the ear from your ladyship's fair hands? Noble captain, lend a reasonable thwack, for the love of God, with that cane of yours over these poor shoulders." And when he had, by such earnest solicitations, made a shift to procure a basting sufficient to swell up his fancy and his sides, he would return home extremely comforted, and full of terrible accounts of what he had undergone for the public good. "Observe this stroke" (said he, showing his bare shoulders); "a plaguy janizary gave it me this very morning, at seven o'clock, as, with much ado, I was driving off the great Turk. Neighbours,

mind, this broken head deserves a plaster; had poor Jack been tender of his noddle, you would have seen the pope and the French king, long before this time of day, among your wives and your warehouses. Dear christians, the great Mogul was come as far as Whitechapel, and you may thank these poor sides that he hath not (God bless us!) already swallowed up man, woman, and child."

It was highly worth observing the singular effects of that aversion or antipathy which Jack and his brother Peter seemed, even to an affectation, to bear against each other. Peter had lately done some rogueries that forced him to abscond, and he seldom ventured to stir out before night, for fear of bailiffs. Their lodgings were at the two most distant parts of the town from each other; and whenever their occasions or humours called them abroad, they would make choice of the oddest unlikely times, and most uncouth rounds they could invent, that they might be sure to avoid one another; yet, after all this, it was their perpetual fortune to meet. The reason of which is easy enough to apprehend; for, the phrensy and the spleen of both having the same foundation, we may look upon them as two pair of compasses, equally extended, and the fixed foot of each remaining in the same centre, which, though moving contrary ways at first, will be sure to encounter somewhere or other in the circumference. Besides, it was among the great misfortunes of Jack to bear a huge personal resemblance with his brother Peter. Their humour and dispositions were not only the same, but there was a close analogy in their shape, their size, and their mien. Insomuch, as nothing was more frequent than for a bailiff to seize Jack by the shoulders, and cry, "Mr. Peter, you are the king's prisoner." Or, at other times, for one of Peter's nearest friends to accost Jack with open arms, "Dear Peter, I am

glad to see thee; pray send me one of your best medicines for the worms." This, we may suppose, was a mortifying return of those pains and proceedings Jack had laboured in so long; and finding how directly opposite all his endeavours had answered to the sole end and intention which he had proposed to himself, how could it avoid having terrible effects upon a head and heart so furnished as his? However, the poor remainders of his coat bore all the punishment; the orient sun never entered upon his diurnal progress without missing a piece of it. He hired a tailor to stitch up the collar so close that it was ready to choke him, and squeezed out his eyes at such a rate as one could see nothing but the white. What little was left of the main substance of the coat he rubbed every day for two hours against a rough-cast wall, in order to grind away the remnants of lace and embroidery; but at the same time went on with so much violence that he proceeded a heathen philosopher. Yet, after all he could do of this kind, the success continued still to disappoint his expectation. For, as it is the nature of rags to bear a kind of mock resemblance to finery, there being a sort of fluttering appearance in both which is not to be distinguished at a distance, in the dark, or by short-sighted eyes, so, in those junctures, it fared with Jack and his tatters, that they offered to the first view a ridiculous flaunting, which, assisting the resemblance in person and air, thwarted all his projects of separation, and left so near a similitude between them as frequently deceived the very disciples and followers of both.

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*Desunt non-* . . . . . .

*nulla.* . . . . . .

The old Sclavonian proverb said well, that it is with men as with asses; whoever would keep them fast must find a

very good hold at their ears. Yet I think we may affirm that it has been verified by repeated experience that—

"Effugiet tamen hæc sceleratus vincula Proteus."

It is good, therefore, to read the maxims of our ancestors, with great allowances to times and persons; for, if we look into primitive records, we shall find that no revolutions have been so great or so frequent as those of human ears. In former days there was a curious invention to catch and keep them, which I think we may justly reckon among the *artes perditæ;* and how can it be otherwise, when in the latter centuries the very species is not only diminished to a very lamentable degree, but the poor remainder is also degenerated so far as to mock our skilfullest tenure? For, if the only slitting of one ear in a stag has been found sufficient to propagate the defect through a whole forest, why should we wonder at the greatest consequences from so many loppings and mutilations to which the ears of our fathers, and our own, have been of late so much exposed? It is true, indeed, that while this island of ours was under the dominion of grace, many endeavours were made to improve the growth of ears once more among us. The proportion of largeness was not only looked upon as an ornament of the outward man, but as a type of grace in the inward. Besides, it is held by naturalists that, if there be a protuberancy of parts in the superior region of the body, as in the ears and nose, there must be a parity also in the inferior: and, therefore, in that truly pious age, the males in every assembly, according as they were gifted, appeared very forward in exposing their ears to view, and the regions about them; because Hippocrates tells us that, when the vein behind the ear happens to be cut, a man

becomes an eunuch; and the females were nothing backwarder in beholding and edifying by them; whereof those who had already used the means looked about them with great concern, in hopes of conceiving a suitable offspring by such a prospect: others, who stood candidates for benevolence found there a plentiful choice, and were sure to fix upon such as discovered the largest ears, that the breed might not dwindle between them. Lastly, the devouter sisters, who looked upon all extraordinary dilatations of that member as protrusions of zeal, or spiritual excrescences, were sure to honour every head they sat upon as if they had been marks of grace; but especially that of the preacher, whose ears were usually of the prime magnitude; which, upon that account, he was very frequent and exact in exposing with all advantages to the people; in his rhetorical paroxysms turning sometimes to hold forth the one, and sometimes to hold forth the other: from which custom the whole operation of preaching is to this very day, among their professors, styled by the phrase of holding forth.

Such was the progress of the saints for advancing the size of that member; and it is thought the success would have been every way answerable, if, in process of time, a cruel king had not arisen,* who raised a bloody persecution against all ears above a certain standard: upon which, some were glad to hide their flourishing sprouts in a black border, others crept wholly under a periwig; some were slit, others cropped, and a great number sliced off to the stumps. But of this more hereafter in my general history of ears, which I design very speedily to bestow upon the public.

From this brief survey of the falling state of ears in the last age, and the small care had to advance their

* Charles II., who persecuted non-conformists.

ancient growth in the present, it is manifest how little reason we can have to rely upon a hold so short, so weak, and so slippery, and that whoever desires to catch mankind fast must have recourse to some other methods. Now, he that will examine human nature with circumspection enough may discover several handles, whereof the six senses afford one a-piece, beside a great number that are screwed to the passions, and some few riveted to the intellect. Among these last, curiosity is one, and of all others, affords the firmest grasp: curiosity, that spur in the side, that bridle in the mouth, that ring in the nose, of a lazy and impatient and a grunting reader. By this handle it is, that an author should seize upon his readers; which as soon as he has once compassed, all resistance and struggling are in vain; and they become his prisoners as close as he pleases, till weariness or dulness force him to let go his gripe.

And therefore, I, the author of this miraculous treatise, having hitherto, beyond expectation, maintained, by the aforesaid handle, a firm hold upon my gentle readers, it is with great reluctance that I am at length compelled to remit my grasp; leaving them, in the perusal of what remains, to that natural oscitancy inherent in the tribe. I can only assure thee, courteous reader, for both our comforts, that my concern is altogether equal to thine for my unhappiness in losing, or mislaying among my papers, the remaining part of these memoirs; which consisted of accidents, turns, and adventures, both new, agreeable, and surprising; and therefore calculated, in all due points, to the delicate taste of this our noble age. But, alas! with my utmost endeavours, I have been able only to retain a few of the heads. Under which, there was a full account how Peter got a protection out of

the king's bench; and of a reconcilement between Jack and him, upon a design they had, in a certain rainy night, to trepan brother Martin into a spunging-house, and there strip him to the skin. How Martin, with much ado, showed them both a fair pair of heels. How a new warrant came out against Peter; upon which, how Jack left him in the lurch, stole his protection, and made use of it himself. How Jack's tatters came into fashion in court and city; how he got upon a great horse, and eat custard. But the particulars of all these, with several others which have now slid out of my memory, are lost beyond all hopes of recovery. For which misfortune, leaving my readers to condole with each other, as far as they shall find it to agree with their several constitutions, but conjuring them by all the friendship that has passed between us, from the title-page to this, not to proceed so far as to injure their healths for an accident past remedy—I now go on to the ceremonial part of an accomplished writer, and therefore, by a courtly modern, least of all others to be omitted.

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## THE CONCLUSION.

GOING too long is a cause of abortion as effectual, though not so frequent, as going too short, and holds true especially in the labours of the brain. Well fare the heart of that noble jesuit* who first adventured to confess in print that books must be suited to their several seasons, like dress, and diet, and diversions; and better fare our

* Père d'Orleans.

noble nation for refining upon this among other French modes. I am living fast to see the time when a book that misses its tide shall be neglected, as the moon by day, or like mackerel a week after the season. No man has more nicely observed our climate than the bookseller who bought the copy of this work; he knows to a tittle what subjects will best go off in a dry year, and which it is proper to expose foremost when the weather-glass is fallen to much rain. When he had seen this treatise, and consulted his almanac upon it, he gave me to understand that he had manifestly considered the two principal things, which were, the bulk and the subject, and found it would never take but after a long vacation, and then only in case it should happen to be a hard year for turnips. Upon which I desired to know, considering my urgent necessities, what he thought might be acceptable this month. He looked westward and said, I doubt we shall have a fit of bad weather; however, if you could prepare some pretty little banter (but not in verse), or a small treatise upon the ——, it would run like wildfire. But if it hold up, I have already hired an author to write something against Dr. Bentley, which I am sure will turn to account.*

At length we agreed upon this expedient; that when a customer comes from one of these, and desires in confidence to know the author, he will tell him very privately as a friend, naming whichever of the wits shall happen to be that week in vogue; and if Durfey's last play shall be in course, I would as lieve he may be the person as Congreve. This I mention, because I am wonderfully well

* When Dr. Prideaux brought the copy of his *Connection of the Old and New Testament* to the bookseller, he told him it was a dry subject, and the printing could not safely be ventured unless he would enliven it with a little humour.—*Hawkesworth.*

acquainted with the present relish of our courteous readers; and have often observed with singular pleasure, that a fly driven from a honey-pot will immediately, with very good appetite, alight and finish his meal on an excrement.

I have one word to say upon the subject of profound writers, who are grown very numerous of late; and I know very well the judicious world is resolved to list me in that number. I conceive therefore, as to the business of being profound, that it is with writers as with wells—a person with good eyes may see to the bottom of the deepest, provided any water be there: and often when there is nothing in the world at the bottom besides dryness and dirt, though it be but a yard and a-half under-ground, it shall pass, however, for wondrous deep, upon no wiser a reason than because it is wondrous dark.

I am now trying an experiment very frequent among modern authors, which is to write upon nothing; when the subject is utterly exhausted, to let the pen still move on: by some called the ghost of wit, delighting to walk after the death of its body. And to say the truth, there seems to be no part of knowledge in fewer hands than that of discerning when to have done. By the time that an author has written out a book he and his readers are become old acquaintance, and grow very loth to part; so that I have sometimes known it to be in writing as in visiting, where the ceremony of taking leave has employed more time than the whole conversation before. The conclusion of a treatise resembles the conclusion of human life, which has sometimes been compared to the end of a feast, where few are satisfied to depart, *ut plenus vitæ conviva;* for men will sit down after the fullest meal, though it be only to doze or to sleep out the rest of the day. But in this latter I differ extremely from other

writers; and shall be too proud if, by all my labours, I can have anyways contributed to the repose of mankind in times so turbulent and unquiet as these. Neither do I think such an employment so very alien from the office of a wit as some would suppose. For, among a very polite nation in Greece, there were the same temples built and consecrated to Sleep and the Muses; between which two deities they believed the strictest friendship was established.

I have one concluding favour to request of my reader, that he will not expect to be equally diverted and informed by every line or every page of this discourse; but give some allowance to the author's spleen and short fits or intervals of dulness, as well as his own; and lay it seriously to his conscience, whether, if he were walking the streets in dirty weather or a rainy day, he would allow it fair dealing in folks at their ease from a window to criticise his gait and ridicule his dress at such a juncture.

In my disposure of employments of the brain I have thought fit to make invention the master, and to give method and reason the office of its lackeys. The cause of this distribution was, from observing it my peculiar case to be often under a temptation of being witty, upon occasions where I could be neither wise, nor sound, nor anything to the matter in hand. And I am too much a servant of the modern way to neglect any such opportunities, whatever pains or improprieties I may be at to introduce them. For I have observed that, from a laborious collection of seven hundred and thirty-eight flowers and shining hints of the best modern authors, digested with great reading into my book of common-places, I have not been able, after five years, to draw, book, or force into common conversation, any more than a dozen.

Of which dozen, the one moiety failed of success by being dropped among unsuitable company; and the other cost me so many strains and traps and ambages to introduce, that I at length resolved to give it over. Now, this disappointment (to discover a secret), I must own, gave me the first hint of setting up for an author; and I have since found among some particular friends, that it is become a very general complaint, and has produced the same effects upon many others. For I have remarked many a towardly word to be wholly neglected or despised in discourse, which has passed very smoothly with some consideration and esteem after its preferment and sanction in print. But now, since by the liberty and encouragement of the press, I am grown absolute master of the occasions and opportunities to expose the talents I have acquired, I already discover that the issues of my *observanda* begin to grow too large for the receipts. Therefore I shall here pause a while, till I find, by feeling the world's pulse and my own, that it will be of absolute necessity for us both to resume my pen.

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## THE HISTORY OF MARTIN.*

Giving an account of his departure from Jack, and their setting up for themselves, on which account they were obliged to travel and meet many disasters, finding no shelter near Peter's habitation; Martin succeeds in the north: Peter thunders against Martin for the loss of the large revenue he used to receive from thence. Harry Huff sent Martin a challenge to fight, which he received; Peter rewards Harry for the pretended victory, which encouraged Harry

* Inserted in the earlier editions of the *Tale* under the title *What follows after Section IX. in the Manuscript;* but afterwards omitted by Swift's direction.

to huff Peter also. With many other extraordinary adventures of the said Martin in several places with many considerable persons. With a digression concerning the nature, usefulness, and necessity of wars and quarrels.

How Jack and Martin, being parted, set up each for himself. How they travelled over hills and dales, met many disasters, suffered much from the good cause, and struggled with difficulties and wants, not having where to lay their head; by all which they afterwards proved themselves to be right father's sons, and Peter to be spurious. Finding no shelter near Peter's habitation, Martin travelled northwards, and finding the Thuringians and neighbouring people disposed to change, he set up his stage first among them; where, making it his business to cry down Peter's powders, plasters, salves, and drugs, which he had sold a long time at a dear rate, allowed Martin none of the profit, though he had been often employed in recommending and putting them off; the good people, willing to save their pence, began to hearken to Martin's speeches. How several great lords took the hint, and on the same account declared for Martin; particularly one, who not having enough of one wife wanted to marry a second; and knowing Peter used not to grant such licenses but at a swinging price, he struck up a bargain with Martin, whom he found more tractable, and who assured him he had the same power to allow such things. How most of the other northern lords, for their own private ends, withdrew themselves and their dependants from Peter's authority, and closed in with Martin. How Peter, enraged at the loss of such large territories, and consequently of so much revenue, thundered against Martin, and sent out the strongest and most terrible of his bulls to devour him; but this having no effect, and Martin defending himself

boldly and dexterously, Peter at last put forth proclamations, declaring Martin and all his adherents rebels and traitors, ordaining and requiring all his loving subjects to take up arms, and to kill, burn, and destroy all and every one of them, promising large rewards, etc., upon which ensued bloody wars and desolation.

How Harry Huff,* lord of Albion, one of the greatest bullies of those days, sent a cartel to Martin to fight him on a stage, at cudgels, quarter-staff, back-sword, etc. Hence the origin of that genteel custom of prize-fighting, so well known and practised to this day among those polite islanders, though unknown everywhere else. How Martin, being a bold, blustering fellow, accepted the challenge; how they met and fought, to the great diversion of the spectators; and, giving one another broken heads and many bloody wounds and bruises, how they both drew off victorious; in which their example has been frequently imitated by great clerks and others since that time. How Martin's friends applauded his victory; and how lord Harry's friends complimented him on the same score; and particularly lord Peter, who sent him a fine feather for his cap, to be worn by him and his successors as a perpetual mark for his bold defence of lord Peter's cause. How Harry, flushed with his pretended victory over Martin, began to huff Peter also, and at last downright quarrelled with him about a wench. How some of lord Harry's tenants, ever fond of changes, began to talk kindly of Martin, for which he mauled them soundly; as he did also those that adhered to Peter. How he turned some out of house and hold, others he hanged or burnt, etc.

How Harry Huff, after a good deal of blustering, wrenching and bullying, died, and was succeeded by a good-natured

* Henry VIII.

boy, who, giving way to the general bent of his tenants, allowed Martin's notions to spread everywhere and take deep root in Albion. How, after his death, the farm fell into the hands of a lady who was violently in love with lord Peter. How she purged the whole country with fire and sword, resolved not to leave the name or remembrance of Martin. How Peter triumphed, and set up shops again for selling his own powders, plasters, and salves, which were now called the only true ones, Martin's being all declared counterfeit. How great numbers of Martin's friends left the country, and, travelling up and down in foreign parts, grew acquainted with many of Jack's followers, and took a liking to many of their notions and ways, which they afterwards brought back into Albion, now under another lady, more moderate and more cunning than the former. How she endeavoured to keep friendship both with Peter and Martin, and trimmed for some time between the two, not without countenancing and assisting at the same time many of Jack's followers; but, finding no possibility of reconciling all the three brothers, because each would be master and allow no other salves, powders, or plasters to be used but his own, she discarded all three, and set up a shop for those of her own farm, well furnished with powders, plasters, salves, and all other drugs necessary, all right and true, composed according to receipts by physicians and apothecaries of her own creating, which they extracted out of Peter's, and Martin's, and Jack's receipt-books, and of this medley or hodgepodge made up a dispensatory of their own; strictly forbidding any other to be used, and particularly Peter's, from which the greatest part of this new dispensatory was stolen. How the lady, farther to confirm this change, wisely imitating her father, degraded Peter from the rank he pretended as eldest brother, and set

up herself in his place as head of the family, and ever after wore her father's old cap, with the fine feather he had got from Peter for standing his friend ; which has likewise been worn with no small ostentation to this day by all her successors, though declared enemies to Peter. How lady Bess and her physicians, being told of many defects and imperfections in their new medley dispensatory, resolve on a farther alteration, and to purge it from a great deal of Peter's trash that still remained in it, but were prevented by her death. How she was succeeded by a north-country farmer, who pretended great skill in the managing of farms, though he could never govern his own poor little farm, nor yet this large new one after he got it. How this new landlord, to show his valour and dexterity, fought against enchanters, weeds, giants, and windmills, and claimed great honour for his victories, though he ofttimes b-sh-t himself when there was no danger. How his successor, no wiser than he, occasioned great disorders by the new methods he took to manage his farms. How he attempted to establish, in his northern farm, the same dispensatory used in the southern, but miscarried because Jack's powders, pills, salves, and plasters, were there in great vogue.

How the author finds himself embarrassed for having introduced into his history a new sect, differing from the three he had undertaken to treat of, and how his inviolable respect to the sacred number *three* obliges him to reduce these four, as he intends to do all other things, to that number, and for that end to drop the former Martin, and to substitute in his place lady Bess's institution, which is to pass under the name of Martin in the sequel of this true history. This weighty point being cleared, the author goes on and describes mighty quarrels and squabbles between Jack and Martin ; how sometimes the one had the better, and

sometimes the other, to the great desolation of both farms, till at last both sides concur to hang up the landlord, who pretended to die a martyr for Martin, though he had been true to neither side, and was suspected by many to have a great affection for Peter.

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## A DIGRESSION ON THE NATURE, USEFULNESS, AND NECESSITY OF WARS AND QUARRELS.

This being a matter of great consequence, the author intends to treat it methodically and at large in a treatise apart, and here to give only some hints of what his large treatise contains. The state of war natural to all creatures. War is an attempt to take by violence from others a part of what they have and we want. Every man fully sensible of his own merit, and finding it not only duly regarded by others, has a natural right to take from them all that he thinks due to himself; and every creature, finding its own wants more than those of others, has the same right to take everything its nature requires. Brutes much more modest in their pretensions this way than men; and mean men more than great ones. The higher one raises his pretensions this way, the more bustle he makes about them; and the more success he has, the greater hero. Thus greater souls, in proportion to their superior merit, claim a greater right to take everything from meaner folks. This the true foundation of grandeur and heroism, and of the distinction of degrees among men. War therefore necessary to establish subordination, and to found cities, kingdoms, etc., as also to purge bodies politic of gross humours. Wise princes find it necessary to have wars abroad, to keep peace at

home. War, famine, and pestilence, the usual cures for corruptions in bodies politic. A comparison of these three. The author is to write a panegyric on each of them. The greatest part of mankind loves war more than peace. They are but few and mean-spirited that live in peace with all men. The modest and meek of all kinds always a prey to those of more noble or stronger appetites. The inclination to war universal: those that cannot, or dare not, make war in person, employ others to do it for them. This maintains bullies, bravoes, cut-throats, lawyers, soldiers, etc. Most professions would be useless if all were peaceable. Hence brutes want neither smith nor lawyers, magistrates nor joiners, soldiers nor surgeons. Brutes, having but narrow appetites, are incapable of carrying on or perpetuating war against their own species, or of being led out in troops and multitudes to destroy one another. These prerogatives proper to man alone. The excellency of human nature demonstrated by the vast train of appetites, passions, wants, etc., that attend it. This matter to be more fully treated in the author's Panegyric on Mankind.

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## THE HISTORY OF MARTIN (CONTINUED).

How Jack, having got rid of the old landlord, set up another to his mind,* quarrelled with Martin, and turned him out of doors. How he pillaged all his shops, and abolished the whole dispensatory. How the new landlord laid about him, mauled Peter, worried Martin, and made the whole neighbourhood tremble. How Jack's friends fell out among themselves, split into a thousand parties, turned

* Cromwell.

all things topsy-turvy, till everybody grew weary of them; and at last, the blustering landlord dying, Jack was kicked out of doors, a new landlord brought in, and Martin re-established. How this new landlord let Martin do what he pleased, and Martin agreed to everything his pious landlord desired, provided Jack might be kept low. Of several efforts Jack made to raise up his head, but all in vain; till at last the landlord died, and was succeeded by one who was a great friend to Peter, who, to humble Martin, gave Jack some liberty. How Martin grew enraged at this, called in a foreigner, and turned out the landlord; in which Jack concurred with Martin, because this landlord was entirely devoted to Peter, into whose arms he threw himself, and left his country. How the new landlord secured Martin in the full possession of his former rights, but would not allow him to destroy Jack, who had always been his friend. How Jack got up his head in the north, and put himself in possession of a whole canton, to the great discontent of Martin, who, finding also that some of Jack's friends were allowed to live and get their bread in the south parts of the country, grew highly discontent with the new landlord he had called in to his assistance. How this landlord kept Martin in order, upon which he fell into a raging fever, and swore he would hang himself or join in with Peter, unless Jack's children were all turned out to starve. Of several attempts made to cure Martin, and make peace between him and Jack, that they might unite against Peter; but all made ineffectual by the great address of a number of Peter's friends, that herded among Martin's, and appeared the most zealous for his interest. How Martin, getting abroad in this mad fit, looked so like Peter in his air and dress, and talked so like him, that many of the neighbours could not distinguish the one from the

other ; especially when Martin went up and down strutting in Peter's armour, which he had borrowed to fight Jack. What remedies were used to cure Martin's distemper. . . .

Here the author being seized with a fit of dulness (to which he is very subject), after having read a poetical epistle addressed to ——, it entirely composed his senses, so that he has not writ a line since.

N.B.—Some things that follow after this are not in the MS., but seem to have been written since, to fill up the place of what was not thought convenient then to print.

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## A PROJECT FOR THE UNIVERSAL BENEFIT OF MANKIND.

The author, having laboured so long, and done so much, to serve and instruct the public, without any advantage to himself, has at last thought of a project which will tend to the great benefit of all mankind and produce a handsome revenue to the author. He intends to print by subscription, in ninety-six large volumes in *folio*, an exact description of *Terra Australis incognita*, collected with great care and pains from 999 learned and pious authors of undoubted veracity. The whole work, illustrated with maps and cuts agreeable to the subject, and done by the best masters, will cost but one guinea each volume to subscribers ; one guinea to be paid in advance, and afterwards a guinea on receiving each volume, except the last. This work will be of great use for all men, and necessary for all families, because it contains exacts accounts of all the provinces, colonies, and mansions of that spacious country, where, by a general doom, all transgressors of the law are to be transported ;

and every one having this work may choose out the fittest and best place for himself, there being enough for all, so as every one shall be fully satisfied.

The author supposes that one copy of this work will be bought at the public charge, or out of the parish rates, for every parish church in the three kingdoms, and in all the dominions thereunto belonging; and that every family that can command ten pounds per annum, even though retrenched from less necessary expenses, will subscribe for one. He does not think of giving out above nine volumes yearly; and considering the number requisite, he intends to print at least 100,000 for the first edition. He is to print proposals against next term, with a specimen and a curious map of the capital city, with its twelve gates, from a known author, who took an exact survey of it in a dream. Considering the great care and pains of the author, and the usefulness of the work, he hopes every one will be ready, for their own good as well as his, to contribute cheerfully to it, and not grudge him the profit he may have by it, especially if it comes to a third or fourth edition, as he expects it will very soon.

He doubts not but it will be translated into foreign languages by most nations of Europe, as well as of Asia and Africa, being of as great use to all those nations as to his own; for this reason, he designs to procure patents and privileges for securing the whole benefit to himself from all those different princes and states; and hopes to see many millions of this great work printed, in those different countries and languages, before his death.

After this business is pretty well established, he has promised to put a friend on another project, almost as good as this, by establishing insurance-offices everywhere for securing people from shipwreck and several other accidents in

their voyage to this country; and these offices shall furnish, at a certain rate, pilots well versed in the route, and that know all the rocks, shelves, quicksands, etc., that such pilgrims and travellers may be exposed to. Of these he knows a great number ready instructed in most countries: but the whole scheme of this matter he is to draw up at large and communicate to his friend.

Here ends the manuscript.

# A FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT
OF
# THE BATTLE FOUGHT LAST FRIDAY BETWEEN THE ANCIENT AND THE MODERN BOOKS
IN SAINT JAMES'S LIBRARY.

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### THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

THE following discourse, as it is unquestionably of the same author, so it seems to have been written about the same time, with the former; I mean the year 1697, when the famous dispute was on foot about ancient and modern learning. The controversy took its rise from an essay of Sir William Temple's upon that subject; which was answered by W. Wotton, B.D., with an appendix by Dr. Bentley, endeavouring to destroy the credit of Æsop and Phalaris for authors, whom Sir William Temple had, in the essay before mentioned, highly commended. In that appendix the doctor falls hard upon a new edition of Phalaris, put out by the Honourable Charles Boyle, now Earl of Orrery, to which Mr. Boyle replied at large with great learning and wit; and the doctor voluminously rejoined. In this dispute the town highly resented to see a person of Sir William Temple's character and merits roughly used by the two reverend gentlemen aforesaid, and without any manner of provocation. At length, there appearing no end of the quarrel, our author tells us that the BOOKS in St. James's Library, looking upon them-

selves as parties principally concerned, took up the controversy, and came to a decisive battle; but the manuscript, by the injury of fortune or weather, being in several places imperfect, we cannot learn to which side the victory fell.

I must warn the reader to beware of applying to persons what is here meant only of books, in the most literal sense. So, when Virgil is mentioned, we are not to understand the person of a famous poet called by that name; but only certain sheets of paper bound up in leather, containing in print the works of the said poet: and so of the rest.

### THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

Satire is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for that kind reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it. But, if it should happen otherwise, the danger is not great; and I have learned from long experience never to apprehend mischief from those understandings I have been able to provoke: for anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent.

There is a brain that will endure but one scumming; let the owner gather it with discretion, and manage his little stock with husbandry; but, of all things, let him beware of bringing it under the lash of his betters, because that will make it all bubble up into impertinence, and he will find no new supply. Wit without knowledge being a sort of cream, which gathers in a night to the top, and by a skilful hand may be soon whipped into froth; but once scummed away, what appears underneath will be fit for nothing but to be thrown to the hogs.

# THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS.

WHOEVER examines, with due circumspection, into the annual records of time, will find it remarked that war is the child of pride, and pride the daughter of riches:—the former of which assertions may be soon granted, but one cannot so easily subscribe to the latter; for pride is nearly related to beggary and want, either by father or mother, and sometimes by both: and, to speak naturally, it very seldom happens among men to fall out when all have enough; invasions usually travelling from north to south, that is to say, from poverty to plenty. The most ancient and natural grounds of quarrels are lust and avarice; which, though we may allow to be brethren, or collateral branches of pride, are certainly the issues of want. For, to speak in the phrase of writers upon politics, we may observe in the republic of dogs, which in its original seems to be an institution of the many, that the whole state is ever in the profoundest peace after a full meal; and that civil broils arise among them when it happens for one great bone to be seized on by some leading dog, who either divides it among the few, and then it falls to an oligarchy, or keeps it to himself, and then it ruus up to a tyranny. The same reasoning also holds place among them in those dissensions we behold upon a turgescency in any of their females. For the right of possession lying in common (it being impossible to establish a property in so delicate a case), jealousies and suspicions do so abound, that the whole commonwealth of

that street is reduced to a manifest state of war, of every citizen against every citizen, till some one of more courage, conduct, or fortune than the rest seizes and enjoys the prize: upon which naturally arises plenty of heart-burning, and envy, and snarling against the happy dog. Again, if we look upon any of these republics engaged in a foreign war, either of invasion or defence, we shall find the same reasoning will serve as to the grounds and occasions of each; and that poverty or want, in some degree or other (whether real or in opinion, which makes no alteration in the case), has a great share, as well as pride, on the part of the aggressor.

Now, whoever will please to take this scheme, and either reduce or adapt it to an intellectual state or commonwealth of learning, will soon discover the first ground of disagreement between the two great parties at this time in arms, and may form just conclusions upon the merits of either cause. But the issue or events of this war are not so easy to conjecture at; for the present quarrel is so inflamed by the warm heads of either faction, and the pretensions somewhere or other so exorbitant, as not to admit the least overtures of accommodation. This quarrel first began, as I have heard it affirmed by an old dweller in the neighbourhood, about a small spot of ground, lying and being upon one of the two tops of the hill Parnassus; the highest and largest of which had, it seems, been time out of mind in quiet possession of certain tenants, called the Ancients; and the other was held by the Moderns. But these, disliking their present station, sent certain ambassadors to the ancients, complaining of a great nuisance; how the height of that part of Parnassus quite spoiled the prospect of theirs, especially toward the *east;* and therefore, to avoid a war, offered them the choice of this alternative, either

that the ancients would please to remove themselves and their effects down to the lower summit, which the moderns would graciously surrender to them, and advance into their place; or else the said ancients will give leave to the moderns to come with shovels and mattocks, and level the said hill as low as they shall think it convenient. To which the ancients made answer, how little they expected such a message as this from a colony whom they had admitted, out of their own free grace, to so near a neighbourhood. That, as to their own seat, they were aborigines of it, and therefore to talk with them of a removal or surrender was a language they did not understand. That if the height of the hill on their side shortened the prospect of the moderns, it was a disadvantage they could not help; but desired them to consider whether that injury (if it be any) were not largely recompensed by the shade and shelter it afforded them. That as to the levelling or digging down, it was either folly or ignorance to propose it if they did or did not know how that side of the hill was an entire rock, which would break their tools and hearts, without any damage to itself. That they would therefore advise the moderns rather to raise their own side of the hill than dream of pulling down that of the ancients; to the former of which they would not only give licence, but also largely contribute. All this was rejected by the moderns with much indignation, who still insisted upon one of the two expedients; and so this difference broke out into a long and obstinate war, maintained on the one part by resolution, and by the courage of certain leaders and allies; but, on the other, by the greatness of their number, upon all defeats affording continual recruits. In this quarrel whole rivulets of ink have been exhausted, and the virulence of both parties enormously augmented. Now, it must be here understood

that ink is the great missive weapon in all battles of the learned, which, conveyed through a sort of engine called a quill, infinite numbers of these are darted at the enemy by the valiant on each side, with equal skill and violence, as if it were an engagement of *porcupines*. This malignant liquor was compounded, by the engineer who invented it, of two ingredients, which are, gall and copperas; by its bitterness and venom to suit, in some degree, as well as to foment, the genius of the combatants. And as the Grecians, after an engagement, when they could not agree about the victory, were wont to set up trophies on both sides, the beaten party being content to be at the same expense, to keep itself in countenance (a laudable and ancient custom, happily revived of late in the art of war), so the learned, after a sharp and bloody dispute, do, on both sides, hang out their trophies too, whichever comes by the worst. These trophies have largely inscribed on them the merits of the cause; a full impartial account of such a *battle*, and how the victory fell clearly to the party that set them up. They are known to the world under several names; as disputes, arguments, rejoinders, brief considerations, answers, replies, remarks, reflections, objections, confutations. For a very few days they are fixed up in all public places, either by themselves or their representatives, for passengers to gaze at; whence the chiefest and largest are removed to certain magazines they call libraries, there to remain in a quarter purposely assigned them, and thenceforth begin to be called books of controversy.

In these books is wonderfully instilled and preserved the spirit of each warrior while he is alive; and after his death his soul transmigrates thither to inform them. This at least is the more common opinion; but I believe it is with libraries as with other cemetries; where some philosophers

affirm that a certain spirit, which they call *brutum hominis*, hovers over the monument, till the body is corrupted and turns to dust or to worms, but then vanishes or dissolves; so, we may say, a restless spirit haunts over every book, till dust or worms have seized upon it; which to some may happen in a few days, but to others later: and therefore books of controversy, being, of all others, haunted by the most disorderly spirits, have always been confined in a separate lodge from the rest; and for fear of a mutual violence against each other, it was thought prudent by our ancestors to bind them to the peace with strong iron chains. Of which invention the original occasion was this: When the works of Scotus first came out, they were carried to a certain library, and had lodgings appointed them; but this author was no sooner settled than he went to visit his master, Aristotle; and there both concerted together to seize Plato by main force, and turn him out from his ancient station among the divines, where he had peaceably dwelt near eight hundred years. The attempt succeeded, and the two usurpers have reigned ever since in his stead; but, to maintain quiet for the future, it was decreed that all *polemics* of the larger size should be held fast with a chain.

By this expedient the public peace of libraries might certainly have been preserved if a new species of controversial books had not arisen of late years, instinct with a more malignant spirit, from the war above mentioned between the learned about the higher summit of *Parnassus*.

When these books were first admitted into the public libraries, I remember to have said, upon occasion, to several persons concerned, how I was sure they would create broils wherever they came, unless a world of care were taken: and therefore I advised that the champions of each side

should be coupled together, or otherwise mixed, that, like the blending of contrary poisons, their malignity might be employed among themselves. And it seems I was neither an ill prophet nor an ill counsellor; for it was nothing else but the neglect of this caution which gave occasion to the terrible fight that happened on Friday last between the ancient and modern books in the king's library. Now, because the talk of this battle is so fresh in everybody's mouth, and the expectation of the town so great to be informed in the particuiars, I, being possessed of all qualifications requisite in an historian, and retained by neither party, have resolved to comply with the urgent importunity of my friends, by writing down a full impartial account thereof.

The guardian of the regal library,* a person of great valour, but chiefly renowned for his humanity, had been a fierce champion for the moderns; and, in an engagement upon Parnassus, had vowed, with his own hands to knock down two of the ancient chiefs, who guarded a small pass on the superior rock; but, endeavouring to climb up, was cruelly obstructed by his own unhappy weight and tendency towards his centre; a quality to which those of the modern party are extremely subject; for, being light-headed, they have, in speculation, a wonderful agility, and conceive nothing too high for them to mount; but, in reducing to practice, discover a mighty pressure about their posteriors and their heels. Having thus failed in his design, the disappointed champion bore a cruel rancour to the ancients; which he resolved to gratify by showing all marks of his favour to the books of their adversaries, and lodging them

* The Honourable Mr. Boyle, in the preface to his edition of Phalaris, says he was refused a MS. by the royal librarian, Dr. Bentley.

in the fairest apartments; when, at the same time, whatever book had the boldness to own itself for an advocate of the ancients was buried alive in some obscure corner, and threatened, upon the least displeasure, to be turned out of doors. Besides, it so happened that about this time there was a strange confusion of place among all the books in the library; for which several reasons were assigned. Some imputed it to a great heap of learned dust, which a perverse wind blew off from a shelf of moderns into the keeper's eyes. Others affirmed he had a humour to pick the worms out of the schoolmen, and swallow them fresh and fasting: whereof some fell upon his spleen, and some climbed up into his head, to the great perturbation of both. And lastly, others maintained that, by walking much in the dark about the library, he had quite lost the situation of it out of his head; and therefore, in replacing his books, he was apt to mistake, and clap Des Cartes next to Aristotle; poor Plato had got between Hobbes and the Seven Wise Masters, and Virgil was hemmed in with Dryden on one side and Withers on the other.

Meanwhile those books that were advocates for the moderns chose out one from among them to make a progress through the whole library, examine the number and strength of their party, and concert their affairs. This messenger performed all things very industriously, and brought back with him a list of their forces, in all, fifty thousand, consisting chiefly of light-horse, heavy-armed foot, and mercenaries; whereof the foot were in general but sorrily armed and worse clad; their horses large, but extremely out of case and heart; however, some few, by trading among the ancients, had furnished themselves tolerably enough.

While things were in this ferment, discord grew

extremely high; but words passed on both sides, and ill blood was plentifully bred. Here a solitary ancient, squeezed up among a whole shelf of moderns, offered fairly to dispute the case, and to prove by manifest reason that the priority was due to them from long possession, and in regard of their prudence, antiquity, and, above all, their great merits toward the moderns. But these denied the premises, and seemed very much to wonder how the ancients could pretend to insist upon their antiquity, when it was so plain (if they went to that) that the moderns were much the more ancient of the two. As for any obligations they owed to the ancients, they renounced them all. It is true, said they, we are informed some few of our party have been so mean to borrow their subsistence from you; but the rest, infinitely the greater number (and especially we French and English), were so far from stooping to so base an example, that there never passed, till this very hour, six words between us. For our horses were of our own breeding, our arms of our own forging, and our clothes of our own cutting out and sewing. Plato was by chance up on the next shelf, and observing those that spoke to be in the ragged plight mentioned a while ago; their jades lean and foundered, their weapons of rotten wood, their armour rusty, and nothing but rags underneath; he laughed loud, and in his pleasant way swore, by ——, he believed them.

Now, the moderns had not proceeded in their late negotiation with secrecy enough to escape the notice of the enemy. For those advocates who had begun the quarrel, by setting first on foot the dispute of precedency, talked so loud of coming to a battle, that Sir William Temple happened to overhear them, and gave immediate intelligence to the ancients: who thereupon drew up their scattered

troops together, resolving to act upon the defensive; upon which, several of the moderns fled over to their party, and among the rest Temple himself. This Temple, having been educated and long conversed among the ancients, was, of all the moderns, their greatest favourite, and became their greatest champion.

Things were at this crisis when a material accident fell out. For upon the highest corner of a large window there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out upon all occasions of prey or defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace by brooms from below; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went; where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel; which, yielding to the unequal weight, sunk down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution; or else, that Beelzebub, with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many thousands of his subjects whom his enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length

valiantly resolved to issue forth and meet his fate. Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings, and disengaging them from the ragged remants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured out, when, beholding the chasms, the ruins, and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wits' end; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events (for they knew each other by sight): A plague split you, said he, for a giddy son of a whore; is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here? could not you look before you, and be d——d? do you think I have nothing else to do (in the devil's name) but to mend and repair after your arse?—Good words, friend, said the bee (having now pruned himself, and being disposed to droll): I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born.—Sirrah, replied the spider, if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family, never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners.—I pray have patience, said the bee, or you'll spend your substance, and, for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all, toward the repair of your house.—Rogue, rogue, replied the spider, yet methinks you should have more respect to a person whom all the world allows to be so much your betters.—By my troth, said the bee, the comparison will amount to a very good jest; and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute. At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy, with resolution to be heartily

scurrilous and angry to urge on his own reasons, without the least regard to the answers or objections of his opposite; and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

Not to disparage myself, said he, by the comparison with such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is a universal plunder upon nature; a freebooter over fields and gardens; and, for the sake of stealing will rob a nettle as easily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to show my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person.

I am glad, answered the bee, to hear you grant at least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music; and Providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts, without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit indeed all the flowers and blossoms of the field and garden; but whatever I collect thence enriches myself, without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture and other mathematics, I have little to say: in that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough; but, by woeful experience for us both, it is too plain the materials are naught; and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter, as well as method and art. You boast indeed of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself; that is to say, if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what

issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast; and, though I would by no means lessen or disparage your genuine stock of either, yet I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions, by sweepings exhaled from below; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this; whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all but flybane and a cobweb; or that which, by a universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax.

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books, in arms below, stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue; which was not long undetermined; for the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses, without looking for a reply, and left the spider, like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

It happened upon this emergency that Æsop broke silence first. He had been of late most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the regent's humanity, who had torn off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained him fast among a shelf of moderns. Where, soon discovering how high the quarrel was likely to proceed, he tried all his arts, and turned himself to a thousand forms. At length, in the borrowed shape of an ass, the regent mistook him for a modern; by which means he had time and opportunity to escape to the ancients, just when

the spider and the bee were entering into their contest; to which he gave his attention with a world of pleasure, and when it was ended, swore in the loudest key that in all his life he had never known two cases so parallel and adapt to each other as that in the window and this upon the shelves. The disputants, said he, have admirably managed the dispute between them, have taken in the full strength of all that is to be said on both sides, and exhausted the substance of every argument *pro* and *con*. It is but to adjust the reasonings of both to the present quarrel, then to compare and apply the labours and fruits of each, as the bee has learnedly deduced them, and we shall find the conclusion fall plain and close upon the moderns and us. For pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns, and his paradoxes? he argues in the behalf of you, his brethren, and himself with many boastings of his native stock and great genius; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without. Then he displays to you his great skill in architecture and improvement in the mathematics. To all this the bee, as an advocate retained by us the ancients, thinks fit to answer, that, if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please; yet, if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails (the guts of modern brains), the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb; the duration of which, like that of other spiders' webs, may be imputed to their being forgotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect; unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire, much of a nature

and substance with the spider's poison; which, however, they pretend to spit wholly out of themselves, is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age. As for us the ancients, we are content, with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own beyond our wings and our voice: that is to say, our flights and our language. For the rest, whatever we have got has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of nature; the difference is, that, instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax; thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light.

It is wonderful to conceive the tumult arisen among the books upon the close of this long descant of Æsop: both parties took the hint, and heightened their animosities so on a sudden, that they resolved it should come to a battle. Immediately the two main bodies withdrew, under their several ensigns, to the farther parts of the library, and there entered into cabals and consults upon the present emergency. The moderns were in very warm debates upon the choice of their leaders; and nothing less than the fear impending from their enemies could have kept them from mutinies upon this occasion. The difference was greatest among the horse, where every private trooper pretended to the chief command, from Tasso and Milton to Dryden and Withers. The light-horse were commanded by Cowley and Despreaux. There came the bowmen under their valiant leaders, Des Cartes, Gassendi, and Hobbes; whose strength was such that they could shoot their arrows beyond the atmosphere, never to fall down again, but turn like that of Evander, into meteors; or, like the cannon-ball, into stars. Paracelsus brought a squadron of stinkpot-flingers from the snowy mountains of Rhætia. There came a vast body

of dragoons, of different nations, under the leading of Harvey* their great aga: part armed with scythes, the weapons of death; part with lances and long knives, all steeped in poison; part shot bullets of a most malignant nature, and used white powder, which infallibly killed without report. There came several bodies of heavy-armed foot, all mercenaries, under the ensigns of Guicciardini, Davila, Polydore, Virgil, Buchanan, Mariana, Camden, and others. The engineers were commanded by Regiomontanus and Wilkins. The rest was a confused multitude, led by Scotus, Aquinas, and Bellarmine; of mighty bulk and stature, but without either arms, courage, or discipline. In the last place came infinite swarms of calones, a disorderly rout led by L'Estrange; rogues and ragamuffins, that follow the camp for nothing but the plunder, all without coats to cover them.

The army of the ancients was much fewer in number; Homer led the horse, and Pinder the light-horse; Euclid was chief engineer; Plato and Aristotle commanded the bowmen; Herodotus and Livy the foot; Hippocrates the dragoons; the allies, led by Vossius and Temple, brought up the rear.

All things violently tending to a decisive battle, Fame, who much frequented, and had a large apartment formerly assigned her in the regal library, fled up straight to Jupiter, to whom she delivered a faithful account of all that passed between the two parties below; for among the gods she always tells truth. Jove, in great concern, convokes a council in the milky way. The senate assembled, he declares the occasion of convening them; a bloody battle just impendent between two mighty armies of ancient and modern creatures, called books, wherein the celestial

* Discoverer of the circulation of the blood.

interest was but too deeply concerned. Momus, the patron of the moderns, made an excellent speech in their favour, which was answered by Pallas, the protectress of the ancients. The assembly was divided in their affections; when Jupiter commanded the book of fate to be laid before him. Immediately were brought by Mercury three large volumes in folio, containing memoirs of all things past present, and to come. The clasps were of silver double gilt, the covers of celestial turkey leather, and the paper such as here on earth might pass almost for vellum. Jupiter, having silently read the decree, would communicate the import to none, but presently shut up the book.

Without the doors of this assembly there attended a vast number of light, nimble gods, menial servants to Jupiter: these are his ministering instruments in all affairs below. They travel in a caravan, more or less together, and are fastened to each other, like a link of galley-slaves, by a light chain, which passes from them to Jupiter's great toe: and yet, in receiving or delivering a message, they may never approach above the lowest step of his throne, where he and they whisper to each other through a large hollow trunk. These deities are called by mortal men accidents or events; but the gods call them second causes. Jupiter having delivered his message to a certain number of these divinities, they flew immediately down to the pinnacle of the regal library, and consulting a few minutes, entered unseen, and disposed the parties according to their orders.

Meanwhile Momus, fearing the worst, and calling to mind an ancient prophecy which bore no very good face to his children the moderns, bent his flight to the region of a malignant deity called Criticism. She dwelt on the top of

a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla; there Momus found her extended in her den, upon the spoils of numberless volumes, half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left, Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There was opinion, her sister, light of foot, hoodwinked, and headstrong, yet giddy and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. The goddess herself had claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice, resembled those of an ass; her teeth fallen out before, her eyes turned inward, as if she looked only upon herself; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall; her spleen was so large as to stand prominent, like a dug of the first rate; nor wanted excrescencies in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking; and, what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen increased faster than the sucking could diminish it. Goddess, said Momus, can you sit idly here while our devout worshippers, the moderns, are this minute entering into a cruel battle, and perhaps now lying under the swords of their enemies? who then hereafter will ever sacrifice or build altars to our divinities? Haste, therefore, to the British isle, and, if possible, prevent their destruction; while I make factions among the gods, and gain them over to our party.

Momus, having thus delivered himself, staid not for an answer, but left the goddess to her own resentment. Up she rose in a rage, and, as it is the form upon such occasions, began a soliloquy: It is I (said she) who gave wisdom to infants and idiots; by me children grew wiser than their parents, by me beaux become politicians, and school-boys judges of philosophy: by me sophisters

debate and conclude upon the depths of knowledge; and coffee-house wits, instinct by me, can correct an author's style, and display his minutest errors without understanding a syllable of his matter or his language; by me striplings spend their judgment, as they do their estate, before it comes into their hands. It is I who have deposed wit and and knowledge from their empire over poetry, and advanced myself in their stead. And shall a few upstart ancients dare to oppose me?—But come, my aged parent, and you my children dear, and thou, my beauteous sister; let us ascend my chariot, and haste to assist our devout moderns, who are now sacrificing to us a hecatomb, as I perceive by that grateful smell which from thence reaches my nostrils.

The goddess and her train, having mounted the chariot, which was drawn by tame geese, flew over infinite regions, shedding her influence in due places, till at length she arrived at her beloved island of Britain; but in hovering over its metropolis, what blessings did she not let fall upon her seminaries of Gresham and Covent-garden! And now she reached the fatal plain of St. James's library, at what time the two armies were upon the point to engage: where, entering with all her caravan unseen, and landing upon a case of shelves, now desert, but once inhabited by a colony of virtuosoes, she staid a while to observe the posture of both armies.

But here the tender cares of a mother began to fill her thoughts and move in her breast: for at the head of a troop of modern bowmen she cast her eyes upon her son Wotton, to whom the fates had assigned a very short thread. Wotton, a young hero, whom an unknown father of mortal race begot by stolen embraces with this goddess. He was the darling of his mother above all her children,

and she resolved to go and comfort him. But first, according to the good old custom of deities, she cast about to change her shape, for fear the divinity of her countenance might dazzle his mortal sight and overcharge the rest of his senses. She therefore gathered up her person into an octavo compass: her body grew white and arid, and split in pieces with dryness; the thick turned into pasteboard, and the thin into paper; upon which her parents and children artfully strewed a black juice, or decoction of gall and soot, in form of letters: her head, and voice, and spleen, kept their primitive form; and that which before was a cover of skin did still continue so. In this guise she marched on towards the moderns, undistinguishable in shape and dress from the divine Bentley, Wotton's dearest friend. Brave Wotton, said the goddess, why do our troops stand idle here, to spend their present vigour and opportunity of the day? away, let us haste to the generals, and advise to give the onset immediately. Having spoken thus, she took the ugliest of her monsters, full glutted from her spleen, and flung it invisibly into his mouth, which, flying straight up into his head, squeezed out his eye-balls, gave him a distorted look, and half over-turned his brain. Then she privately ordered two of her beloved children, Dulness and Ill-manners, closely to attend his person in all encounters. Having thus accoutred him, she vanished in a mist, and the hero perceived it was the goddess his mother.

The destined hour of fate being now arrived, the fight began; whereof, before I dare adventure to make a particular description, I must, after the example of other authors, petition for a hundred tongues, and mouths, and hands, and pens, which would all be too little to perform so immense a work. Say, goddess, that presidest over history,

who it was that first advanced in the field of battle! Paracelsus, at the head of his dragoons, observing Galen in the adverse wing, darted his javelin with a mighty force, which the brave ancient received upon his shield, the point breaking in the second fold. . . . .

. . . . . .

*Hic pauca*

. . . . . *desunt.*

They bore the wounded aga on their shields to his chariot

. . . . . .

*Desunt* . . . . . .

*nonnulla.* . . . . . .

Then Aristotle, observing Bacon advance with a furious mien, drew his bow to the head, and let fly his arrow, which missed the valiant modern and went whizzing over his head; but Des Cartes it hit; the steel point quickly found a defect in his headpiece; it pierced the leather and the pasteboard, and went in at his right eye. The torture of the pain whirled the valiant bowman round till death, like a star of superior influence, drew him into his own vortex.

*Ingens hiatus* . . . . .

*hic in MS.* . . . . . .

. . when Homer appeared at the head of the cavalry, mounted on a furious horse, with difficulty managed by the rider himself, but which no other mortal durst approach; he rode among the enemy's ranks, and bore down all before him. Say, goddess, whom he slew first and whom he slew last! First, Gondibert advanced against him, clad in heavy armour and mounted on a staid, sober gelding, not so famed for his speed as his docility in kneeling whenever his rider would mount or alight. He had made a vow to Pallas that he would never

leave the field till he had spoiled Homer of his armour: madman, who had never once seen the wearer, nor understood his strength! Him Homer overthrew, horse and man, to the ground, there to be trampled and choked in the dirt. Then with a long spear he slew Denham, a stout modern, who from his father's side derived his lineage from Apollo, but his mother was of mortal race. He fell, and bit the earth. The celestial part Apollo took, and made it a star; but the terrestrial lay wallowing upon the ground. Then Homer slew Sam Wesley with a kick of his horse's heel; he took Perrault by mighty force out of his saddle, then hurled him at Fontenelle, with the same blow dashing out both their brains.

On the left wing of the horse Virgil appeared, in shining armour, completely fitted to his body: he was mounted on a dapple-grey steed, the slowness of whose pace was an effect of the highest mettle and vigour. He cast his eye on the adverse wing, with a desire to find an object worthy of his valour, when behold upon a sorrel gelding of a monstrous size appeared a foe, issuing from among the thickest of the enemy's squadrons; but his speed was less than his noise; for his horse, old and lean, spent the dregs of his strength in a high trot, which, though it made slow advances, yet caused a loud clashing of his armour terrible to hear. The two cavaliers had now approached within the throw of a lance, when the stranger desired a parley, and, lifting up the vizor of his helmet, a face hardly appeared from within which, after a pause, was known for that of the renowned Dryden. The brave ancient suddenly started, as one possessed with surprise and disappointment together; for the helmet was nine times too large for the head, which appeared situate far in the hinder part, even like the lady in a lobster, or like a mouse under a canopy

of state, or like a shrivelled beau from within the pent-house of a modern periwig; and the voice was suited to the visage, sounding weak and remote. Dryden, in a long harangue, soothed up the good ancient; called him father, and, by a large deduction of genealogies, made it plainly appear that they were nearly related. Then he humbly proposed an exchange of armour, as a lasting mark of hospitality between them. Virgil consented (for the goddess Diffidence came unseen, and cast a mist before his eyes), though his was of gold and cost a hundred beeves, the other's but of rusty iron. However, this glittering armour became the modern yet worse than his own. Then they agreed to exchange horses; but, when it came to the trial, Dryden was afraid and utterly unable to mount.

. . . . . *Alter hiatus*

. . . . . *in MS.*

Lucan appeared upon a fiery horse of admirable shape, but headstrong, bearing the rider where he list over the field; he made a mighty slaughter among the enemy's horse; which destruction to stop, Blackmore, a famous modern (but one of the mercenaries), strenuously opposed himself, and darted his javelin with a strong hand, which, falling short of its mark, struch deep in the earth. Then Lucan threw a lance; but Æsculapius came unseen and turned off the point. Brave modern, said Lucan, I perceive some god protects you, for never did my arm so deceive me before: but what mortal can contend with a god? Therefore, let us fight no longer, but present gifts to each other. Lucan then bestowed the modern a pair of spurs, and Blackmore gave Lucan a bridle.

*Pauca desunt.* . . . . .

. . . . . .

Creech: but the goddess Dulness took a cloud, formed into

the shape of Horace, armed and mounted, and placed in a flying posture before him. Glad was the cavalier to begin a combat with a flying foe, and pursued the image, threatening aloud; till at last it led him to the peaceful bower of his father, Ogleby, by whom he was disarmed and assigned to his repose.

Then Pindar slew ——, and ——, and Oldham, and ——, and Afra* the Amazon, light of foot; never advancing in a direct line, but wheeling with incredible agility and force, he made a terrible slaughter among the enemy's light horse. Him, when Cowley observed, his generous heart burnt within him, and he advanced against the fierce ancient, imitating his address, his pace, and career, as well as the vigour of his horse and his own skill would allow. When the two cavaliers had approached within the length of three javelins, first Cowley threw a lance, which missed Pindar, and, passing into the enemy's ranks, fell ineffectual to the ground. Then Pindar darted a javelin so large and weighty, that scarce a dozen cavaliers, as cavaliers are in our degenerate days, could raise it from the ground; yet he threw it with ease, and it went, by an unerring hand, singing through the air; nor could the modern have avoided present death if he had not luckily opposed the shield that had been given him by Venus.† And now both heroes drew their swords; but the modern was so aghast and disordered that he knew not where he was; his shield dropped from his hands; thrice he fled, and thrice he could not escape; at last he turned, and lifting up his hand in the posture of a suppliant, Godlike Pindar, said he, spare my life, and possess my horse, with these arms, beside the ransom which my friends will give when they hear I am alive

* Mrs. Afra Behn.

† His poem called *The Mistress.*

and your prisoner. Dog! said Pindar, let your ransom stay with your friends; but your carcase shall be left for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. With that he raised his sword, and, with a mighty stroke, cleft the wretched modern in twain, the sword pursuing the blow; and one half lay panting on the ground, to be trod in pieces by the horses' feet; the other half was borne by the frighted steed through the field. This Venus took, washed it seven times in ambrosia, then struck it thrice with a sprig of amaranth; upon which the leather grew round and soft, and the leaves turned into feathers, and, being gilded before, continued gilded still; so it became a dove, and she harnessed it to her chariot. . . . . .

. . . . . *Hiatus valde deflendus in MS.*

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THE EPISODE OF BENTLEY AND WOTTON.

Day being far spent, and the numerous forces of the moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot a captain whose name was Bentley, the most deformed of all the moderns; tall, but without shape or comeliness; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces; and the sound of it, as he marched, was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead, which an Etesian wind blows suddenly down from the roof of some steeple. His helmet was of old rusty iron, but the vizor was brass, which, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain; so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality, of most malignant nature, was seen to distil from his lips. In his right hand he grasped a flail,

and (that he might never be unprovided of an offensive weapon) a vessel full of ordure in his left. Thus completely armed, he advanced with a slow and heavy pace where the modern chiefs were holding a consult upon the sum of things; who, as he came onwards, laughed to behold his crooked leg and humped shoulder, which his boot and armour, vainly endeavouring to hide, were forced to comply with and expose. The generals made use of him for his talent of railing; which, kept within government, proved frequently of great service to their cause, but, at other times, did more mischief than good; for, at the least touch of offence, and often without any at all, he would, like a wounded elephant, convert it against his leaders. Such, at this juncture, was the disposition of Bentley; grieved to see the enemy prevail, and dissatisfied with everybody's conduct but his own. He humbly gave the modern generals to understand that he conceived, with great submission, they were all a pack of rogues, and fools, and sons of whores, and d—d cowards, and confounded loggerheads, and illiterate whelps, and nonsensical scoundrels; that, if himself had been constituted general, those presumptuous dogs, the ancients, would long before this have been beaten out of the field. You, said he, sit here idle; but when I, or any other valiant modern, kill an enemy, you are sure to seize the spoil. But I will not march one foot against the foe till you all swear to me that whomever I take or kill, his arms I shall quietly possess. Bentley having spoken thus, Scaliger, bestowing him a sour look, Miscreant prater! said he, eloquent only in thine own eyes, thou railest without wit, or truth, or discretion. The malignity of thy temper perverteth nature; thy learning makes thee more barbarous; thy study of humanity more inhuman; thy converse among poets more grovelling, miry, and dull.

All arts of civilising others render thee rude and untractable; courts have taught thee ill manners, and polite conversation has finished thee a pedant. Besides, a greater coward burdeneth not the army. But never despond; I pass my word, whatever spoil thou takest shall certainly be thy own; though I hope that vile carcase will first become a prey to kites and worms.

Bentley durst not reply; but, half choked with spleen and rage, withdrew, in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton; resolving by policy or surprise to attempt some neglected quarter of the ancient's army. They began their march over carcases of their slaughtered friends; then to the right of their own forces; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus's tomb, which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, toward the enemy's outguards; looking about, if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed and remote from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they, with tails depressed and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow; meanwhile the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection or in sphere direct; but one surveys the region round, while the other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcase half devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection, when at a distance they might perceive two shining suits of

armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing of this adventure fell to Bentley; on he went, and in his van Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the ancient's army, Phalaris and Æsop, lay fast asleep; Bentley would fain have despatched them both, and, stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris's breast. But then the goddess Affright, interposing, caught the modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw; both the dormant heroes happened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping, and busy in a dream. For Pharlaris was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull. And Æsop dreamed that, as he and the ancient chiefs were lying on the ground, a wild ass broke loose, ran about, trampling and kicking and dunging in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours, and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He, in the meantime, had wandered long in search of some enterprise, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued from a fountain hard by, called, in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and, parched with thirst, resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice with profane hands he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but, ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came, and in the channel held his shield betwixt the modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so

Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to draw too deep or far from the spring.

At the fountain-head Wotton discerned two heroes; the one he could not distinguish, but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton, observing him, with quaking knees and trembling hands, spoke thus to himself: O that I could kill this destroyer of our army, what renown should I purchase among the chiefs! but to issue out against him, man against man, shield against shield, and lance against lance, what modern of us dare? for he fights like a god, and Pallas or Apollo are ever at his elbow. But, O mother! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son of so great a goddess, grant me to hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils. The first part of this prayer the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate, was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and, brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might; the goddess, his mother, at the same time adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went hizzing, and reached even to the belt of the averted ancient, upon which lightly grazing, it fell to the ground. Temple neither felt the weapon touch him nor heard it fall: and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance against so great a leader unrevenged; but Apollo, enraged that a javelin flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess should pollute his fountain, put on the shape

of ——, and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple: he pointed first to the lance, then to the distant modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge. Boyle, clad in a suit of armour which had been given him by all the gods, immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains, or Araby desert, sent by his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along, wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains, or a furious boar; if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet, much provoked at the offensive noise, which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder, and with more delight than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy armed and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover Bentley appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping ancients. Boyle observed him well, and soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilt, rage sparkled in his eyes, and, leaving his pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenged on both; but both now fled different ways: and, as a woman in a little house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning, if chance her geese be scattered o'er the com mon, she courses round the plain from side to side, compel ling here and there the stragglers to the flock; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the champaign; so Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends: finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined, and drew themselves in phalanx.

First Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point, and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took up a lance of wondrous length and sharpness; and, as this pair of friends, compacted, stood close side to side, he wheeled him to the right, and, with unusual force, darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and flanking down his arms close to his ribs, hoping to save his body, in went the point, passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate. As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the ribs; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths; so closely joined that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved, loving pair; few equals have you left behind: and happy and immortal shall you be, if all my wit and eloquence can make you.

And now . . . . . .

*Desunt cætera.*

# A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE

# MECHANICAL OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND. A FRAGMENT.

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## THE BOOKSELLER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Discourse came into my hands perfect and entire; but there being several things in it which the present age would not very well bear, I kept it by me some years, resolving it should never see the light. At length, by the advice and assistance of a judicious friend, I retrenched those parts that might give most offence, and have now ventured to publish the remainder. Concerning the author I am wholly ignorant; neither can I conjecture whether it be the same with that of the two foregoing pieces, the original having been sent me at a different time, and in a different hand. The learned reader will better determine, to whose judgment I entirely submit it.

## A DISCOURSE, Etc.

For T. H., Esquire,* at his chambers in the Academy of the Beaux Esprits, in New England.

Sir,—It is now a good while since I have had in my head something, not only very material, but absolutely necessary to my health, that the world should be informed in; for, to tell you a secret, I am able to contain it no longer. However, I have been perplexed for some time to resolve what would be the most proper form to send it abroad in. To which end I have been three days coursing through Westminster-hall, and St. Paul's churchyard, and Fleet-street, to peruse titles; and I do not find any which holds so general a vogue as that of a Letter to a Friend; nothing is more common than to meet with long epistles addressed to persons and places where, at first thinking, one would be apt to imagine it not altogether so necessary or convenient; such as, a neighbour at next door, a mortal enemy, a perfect stranger, or a person of quality in the clouds; and these upon subjects, in appearance, the least proper for conveyance by the post; as long schemes in philosophy, dark and wonderful mysteries of state, laborious dissertations in criticism and philosophy, advice to parliaments, and the like.

Now, sir, to proceed after the method in present wear; for, let me say what I will to the contrary, I am afraid you will publish this letter as soon as ever it comes to your hand. I desire you will be my witness to the world how

* Supposed to be Col. Hunter.

careless and sudden a scribble it has been; that it was but yesterday when you and I began accidentally to fall into discourse on this matter; that I was not very well when we parted; that the post is in such haste I have had no manner of time to digest it into order or correct the style; and if any other modern excuses for haste and negligence shall occur to you in reading, I beg you to insert them, faithfully promising they shall be thankfully acknowledged.

Pray, sir, in your next letter to the Iroquois virtuosi, do me the favour to present my humble service to that illustrious body, and assure them I shall send an account of those phenomena as soon as we can determine them at Gresham.

I have not had a line from the literati of Topinambou these three last ordinaries.

And now, sir, having despatched what I had to say of form or of business, let me entreat you will suffer me to proceed upon my subject, and to pardon me if I make no further use of the epistolary style till I come to conclude.

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## SECTION I.

It is recorded of Mahomet that, upon a visit he was going to pay in Paradise, he had an offer of several vehicles to conduct him upwards; as fiery chariots, winged horses, and celestial sedans; but he refused them all, and would be borne to heaven upon nothing but his ass. Now this inclination of Mahomet, as singular as it seems, has been since taken up by a great number of devout Christians, and doubtless with very good reason. For, since that Arabian is known to have borrowed a moiety of his religious system

from the Christian faith, it is but just he should pay reprisals to such as would challenge them; wherein the good people of England, to do them all right, have not been backward; for, though there is not any other nation in the world so plentifully provided with carriages for that journey, either as to safety or ease, yet there are abundance of us who will not be satisfied with any other machine beside this of Mahomet.

For my own part, I must confess to bear a very singular respect to this animal, by whom I take human nature to be most admirably held forth in all its qualities, as well as operations; and therefore, whatever in my small reading occurs concerning this our fellow-creature, I do never fail to set it down by way of commonplace; and when I have occasion to write upon human reason, politics, eloquence, or knowledge, I lay my memorandums before me, and insert them with a wonderful facility of application. However, among all the qualifications ascribed to this distinguished brute, by ancient or modern authors, I cannot remember this talent of bearing his rider to heaven has been recorded for a part of his character, except in the two examples mentioned already; therefore I conceive the methods of this art to be a point of useful knowledge in very few hands, and which the learned world would gladly be better informed in: this is what I have undertaken to perform in the following discourse. For towards the operation already mentioned many peculiar properties are required both in the rider and the ass, which I shall endeavour to set in as clear a light as I can.

But, because I am resolved, by all means, to avoid giving offence to any party whatever, I will leave off discoursing so closely to the letter as I have hitherto done, and go on for the future by way of allegory; though in such a manner

that the judicious reader may, without much straining, make his applications as often as he shall think fit. Therefore, if you please, from henceforward, instead of the term ass, we shall make use of gifted or enlightened teacher; and the word rider we will exchange for that of fanatic auditory, or any other denomination of the like import. Having settled this weighty point, the great subject of inquiry before us is to examine by what methods this teacher arrives at his gifts, or spirit, or light; and by what intercourse between him and his assembly it is cultivated and supported.

In all my writings I have had constant regard to this great end, not to suit and apply them to particular occasions and circumstances of time, of place, or of person, but to calculate them for universal nature and mankind in general. And of such catholic use I esteem this present disquisition; for I do not remember any other temper of body, or quality of mind, wherein all nations and ages of the world have so unanimously agreed as that of a fanatic strain or tincture of enthusiasm; which, improved by certain persons or societies of men, and by them practised upon the rest, has been able to produce revolutions of the greatest figure in history, as will soon appear to those who know anything of Arabia, Persia, India, or China, of Morocco and Peru. Farther, it has possessed as great a power in the kingdom of knowledge, where it is hard to assign one art or science which has not annexed to it some fanatic branch; such are, the philosopher's stone, the grand elixir, the planetary worlds, the squaring of the circle, the *summum bonum*, Utopian commonwealths, with some others of less or subordinate note, which all serve for nothing else but to employ or amuse this grain of enthusiasm dealt into every composition.

But if this plant has found a root in the fields of empire and of knowledge, it has fixed deeper and spread yet farther upon holy ground; wherein, though it has passed under the general name of enthusiasm, and perhaps arisen from the same original, yet has it produced certain branches of a very different nature, however often mistaken for each other. The word, in its universal acceptation, may be defined, a lifting up of the soul, or its faculties, above matter. This description will hold good in general, but I am only to understand it as applied to religion; wherein there are three general ways of ejaculating the soul, or transporting it beyond the sphere of matter. The first is the immediate act of God, and is called prophecy or inspiration. The second is the immediate act of the devil, and is termed possession. The third is the product of natural causes, the effect of strong imagination, spleen, violent anger, fear, grief, pain, and the like. These three have been abundantly treated on by authors, and therefore shall not employ my inquiry. But the fourth method of religious enthusiasm, or launching out of the soul, as it is purely an effect of artifice and mechanic operation, has been sparingly handled, or not at all, by any writer; because, though it is an art of great antiquity, yet, having been confined to few persons, it long wanted those advancements and refinements which it afterwards met with, since it has grown so epidemic, and fallen into so many cultivating hands.

It is therefore upon this mechanical operation of the spirit that I mean to treat, as it is at present performed by our British workmen. I shall deliver to the reader the result of many judicious observations upon the matter; tracing, as near as I can, the whole course and method of this trade, producing parallel instances and relating certain discoveries that have luckily fallen in my way.

I have said that there is one branch of religious enthusiasm which is purely an effect of nature; whereas the part I mean to handle is wholly an effect of art, which, however, is inclined to work upon certain natures and constitutions more than others. Besides, there is many an operation which in its original was purely an artifice, but through a long succession of ages has grown to be natural. Hippocrates tells us that among our ancestors the Scythians there was a nation called Long-heads, which at first began by a custom among midwives and nurses of moulding, and squeezing, and bracing up the heads of infants; by which means nature, shut out at one passage, was forced to seek another, and, finding room above, shot upwards in the form of a sugar-loaf; and, being diverted that way for some generations, at last found it out of herself, needing no assistance from the nurse's hand. This was the original of the Scythian Long-heads, and thus did custom, from being a second nature, proceed to be a first. To all which there is something very analogous among us of this nation, who are the undoubted posterity of that refined people. For in the age of our fathers there arose a generation of men in this island called Round-heads,* whose race is now spread over three kingdoms; yet in its beginning was merely an operation of art produced by a pair of scissors, a squeeze of the face, and a black cap. These heads, thus formed into a perfect sphere in all assemblies, were most exposed to the view of the female sort, which did influence their concep-

* The fanatics in the time of Charles I., ignorantly applying the text, "Ye know that it is a shame for men to have long hair," cut theirs very short. It is said that the Queen, once seeing Pym, a celebrated patriot, thus cropped, inquired who that round-headed man was; and that from this incident the distinction became general, and the party were called Round-heads.—*Hawkesworth.*

tions so effectually, that nature at last took the hint and did it of herself; so that a round-head has been ever since as familiar a sight among us as a long-head among the Scythians.

Upon these examples, and others easy to produce, I desire the curious reader to distinguish, first, between an effect grown from art into nature, and one that is natural from its beginning; secondly, between an effect wholly natural, and one which has only a natural foundation, but where the superstructure is entirely artificial. For the first and the last of these I understand to come within the districts of my subject. And having obtained these allowances, they will serve to remove any objections that may be raised hereafter against what I shall advance.

The practitioners of this famous art proceed, in general, upon the following fundamental; that the corruption of the senses is the generation of the spirit; because the senses in men are so many avenues to the fort of reason, which in this operation is wholly blocked up. All endeavours must be therefore used, either to divert, bind up, stupefy, fluster, and amuse the senses, or else to justle them out of their stations; and, while they are either absent or otherwise employed, or engaged in a civil war against each other, the spirit enters and performs its part.

Now, the usual methods of managing the senses upon such conjunctures are, what I shall be very particular in delivering, as far as it is lawful for me to do; but, having had the honour to be initiated into the mysteries of every society, I desire to be excused from divulging any rites wherein the profane must have no part.

But here, before I can proceed farther, a very dangerous objection must, if possible, be removed. For it is positively denied by certain critics that the spirit can, by any means, be introduced into an assembly of modern saints; the

disparity being so great in many material circumstances between the primitive way of inspiration and that which is practised in the present age. This they pretend to prove from the second chapter of the Acts, where, comparing both, it appears, first, That the apostles were gathered together with one accord, in one place; by which is meant a universal agreement in opinion and form of worship; a harmony, say they, so far from being found between any two conventicles among us, that it is in vain to expect it between any two heads in the same. Secondly, The spirit instructed the apostles in the gift of speaking several languages; a knowledge so remote from our dealers in this art, that they neither understand propriety of words or phrases in their own. Lastly, say these objectors, the modern artists do utterly exclude all approaches of the spirit, and bar up its ancient way of entering, by covering themselves so close and so industriously a-top; for they will needs have it as a point clearly gained, that the cloven tongues never sat upon the apostles' heads while their hats were on.

Now, the force of these objections seems to consist in the different acceptation of the word spirit; which, if it be understood for a supernatural assistance approaching from without, the objectors have reason, and their assertions may be allowed; but the spirit we treat of here proceeding entirely from within, the argument of these adversaries is wholly eluded. And upon the same account, our modern artificers find it an expedient of absolute necessity to cover their heads as close as they can in order to prevent perspiration, than which nothing is observed to be a greater spender of mechanic light, as we may perhaps further show in a convenient place.

To proceed therefore upon the phenomenon of spiritual

mechanism, it is here to be noted that in forming and working up the spirit the assembly has a considerable share as well as the preacher. The method of this arcanum is as follows: they violently strain their eyeballs inward, half closing the lids; then, as they sit, they are in a perpetual motion of see-saw, making long hums at proper periods, and continuing the sound at equal height, choosing their time in those intermissions while the preacher is at ebb. Neither is this practice in any part of it so singular and improbable as not to be traced in distant regions from reading and observation. For, first, the Jauguis [Bernier, Mem. de Megol.], or enlightened saints of India, see all their visions by help of an acquired straining and pressure of the eyes. Secondly, the art of see-saw on a beam, and swinging by session upon a cord, in order to raise artificial ecstasies, has been derived to us from our Scythian [Guagnini Hist. Sarmat.] ancestors, where it is practised at this day among the women. Lastly, the whole proceeding, as I have here related it, is performed by the natives of Ireland with a considerable improvement; and it is granted that this noble nation has, of all others, admitted fewer corruptions and degenerated least from the purity of the old Tartars. Now, it is usual for a lot of Irish men and women to abstract themselves from matter, bind up all their senses, grow visionary and spiritual, by influence of a short pipe of tobacco handed round the company, each preserving the smoke in his mouth till it comes again to his turn to take in fresh; at the same time there is a concert of a continued gentle hum, repeated and renewed by instinct as occasion requires; and they move their bodies up and down to a degree that sometimes their heads and points lie parallel to the horizon. Meanwhile you may observe their eyes turned up, in the posture of one who endeavours to

keep himself awake; by which, and many other symptoms among them, it manifestly appears that the reasoning faculties are all suspended and superseded, that imagination has usurped the seat, scattering a thousand deliriums over the brain. Returning from this digression, I shall describe the methods by which the spirit approaches. The eyes being disposed according to art, at first you can see nothing; but after a short pause a small glimmering light begins to appear and dance before you: then, by frequently moving your body up and down, you perceive the vapours to ascend very fast, till you are perfectly dosed and flustered like one who drinks too much in a morning. Meanwhile the preacher is also at work; he begins a loud hum which pierces you quite through; this is immediately returned by the audience, and you find yourself prompted to imitate them by a mere spontaneous impulse, without knowing what you do. The *interstitia* are duly filled up by the preacher to prevent too long a pause, under which the spirit would soon faint and grow languid.

This is all I am allowed to discover about the progress of the spirit with relation to that part which is borne by the assembly; but in the methods of the preacher, to which I now proceed, I shall be more large and particular.

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## SECTION II.

You will read it very gravely remarked in the books of those illustrious and right eloquent penmen, the modern travellers, that the fundamental difference in point of religion between the wild Indians and us, lies in this—that we worship God, and they worship the devil. But there

are certain critics who will by no means admit of this distinction, rather believing that all nations whatsoever adore the true God, because they seem to intend their devotions to some invisible power of greatest goodness and ability to help them; which perhaps will take in the brightest attributes ascribed to the Divinity. Others again inform us that those idolators adore two principles—the principle of good, and that of evil; which indeed I am apt to look upon as the most universal notion that mankind, by the mere light of nature, ever entertained of things invisible. How this idea has been managed by the Indians and us, and with what advantage to the understandings of either, may well deserve to be examined. To me the difference appears little more than this, that they are put oftener upon their knees by their fears, and we by our desires; that the former set them a praying, and us a cursing. What I applaud them for is, their discretion in limiting their devotions and their deities to their several districts, nor ever suffering the liturgy of the white God to cross or to interfere with that of the black. Not so with us, who, pretending by the lines and measures of our reason to extend the dominion of one invisible power, and contract that of the other, have discovered a gross ignorance in the natures of good and evil, and most horribly confounded the frontiers of both. After men have lifted up the throne of their divinity to the *cœlum empyræum*, adorned with all such qualities and accomplishments as themselves seem most to value and possess—after they have sunk their principle of evil to the lowest centre, bound him with chains, loaded him with curses, furnished him with viler dispositions than any rake-hell of the town, accoutred him with tail, and horns, and huge claws, and saucer eyes—I laugh aloud to see these reasoners at the

same time engaged in wise dispute, about certain walks and purlieus, whether they are in the verge of God or the devil; seriously debating whether such and such influences come into men's minds from above or below; whether certain passions and affections are guided by the evil spirit or the good—

> "Dum fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum
> Discernunt avidi."

Thus do men establish a fellowship of Christ with Belial, and such is the analogy they make between cloven tongues and cloven feet. Of the like nature is the disquisition before us: it has continued these hundred years an even debate whether the deportment and the cant of our English enthusiastic preachers were possession or inspiration; and a world of argument has been drained on either side, perhaps to little purpose. For I think it is in life as in tragedy, where it is held a conviction of great defect, both in order and invention, to interpose the assistance of preternatural power without an absolute and last necessity. However, it is a sketch of human vanity for every individual to imagine the whole universe is interested in his meanest concern. If he has got cleanly over a kennel, some angel unseen descended on purpose to help him by the hand; if he has knocked his head against a post, it was the devil for his sins let loose from hell on purpose to buffet him. Who that sees a little paltry mortal, droning, and dreaming, and drivelling to a multitude, can think it agreeable to common good sense that either heaven or hell should be put to the trouble of influence or inspection upon what he is about? therefore I am resolved immediately to weed this error out of mankind, by making it clear that this mystery of vending spiritual gifts is nothing but a trade, acquired by as much

instruction, and mastered by equal practice and application, as others are. This will best appear by describing and deducting the whole process of the operation, as variously as it hath fallen under my knowledge or experience.

. . . . . .

[*Here the whole scheme of spiritual mechanism was deduced and explained, with an appearance of great reading and observation; but it was thought neither safe nor convenient to print it.*]

. . . . . .

Here it may not be amiss to add a few words upon the laudable practice of wearing quilted caps; which is not a matter of mere custom, humour, or fashion, as some would pretend, but an institution of great sagacity and use: these, when moistened with sweat, stop all perspiration; and, by reverberating the heat, prevent the spirit from evaporating any way but at the mouth; even as a skilful housewife that covers her still with a wet clout for the same reason, and finds the same effect. For it is the opinion of choice *virtuosi* that the brain is only a crowd of little animals, but with teeth and claws extremely sharp, and therefore cling together in the contexture we behold, like the picture of Hobbes's Leviathan, or like bees in perpendicular swarm upon a tree, or like a carrion corrupted into vermin, still preserving the shape and figure of the mother animal: that all invention is formed by the morsure of two or more of these animals upon certain capillary nerves which proceed from thence, whereof three branches spread into the tongue, and two into the right hand. They hold also that these animals are of a constitution extremely cold; that their food is the air we attract, their excrement phlegm; and that what we vulgarly call rheums, and colds, and distillations, is nothing else but an epidemical looseness, to which

that little commonwealth is very subject from the climate it lies under. Further, that nothing less than a violent heat can disentangle these creatures from their hamated station of life, or give them vigour and humour to imprint the marks of their little teeth. That if the morsure be hexagonal it produces poetry; the circular gives eloquence: if the bite hath been conical, the person whose nerve is so affected shall be disposed to write upon politics; and so of the rest.

I shall now discourse briefly by what kind of practices the voice is best governed toward the composition and improvement of the spirit; for, without a competent skill in tuning and toning each word, and syllable, and letter, to their due cadence, the whole operation is incomplete, misses entirely of its effect on the hearers, and puts the workman himself to continual pains for new supplies, without success. For it is to be understood that, in the language of the spirit, cant and droning supply the place of sense and reason in the language of men: because, in spiritual harangues, the disposition of the words according to the art of grammar has not the least use, but the skill and influence wholly lie in the choice and cadence of the syllables; even as a discreet composer, who, in setting a song, changes the words and order so often, that he is forced to make it nonsense before he can make it music. For this reason it has been held by some that the art of canting is ever in greatest perfection when managed by ignorance; which is thought to be enigmatically meant by Plutarch, when he tells us that the best musical instruments were made from the bones of an ass. And the profounder critics upon that passage are of opinion, the word, in its genuine signification, means no other than a jaw-bone; though some rather think it to have been the *os sacrum;* but in so nice a case I shall not take

upon me to decide; the curious are at liberty to pick from it whatever they please.

The first ingredient toward the art of canting is, a competent share of inward light: that is to say, a large memory, plentifully fraught with theological polysyllables and mysterious texts from holy writ, applied and digested by those methods and mechanical operations already related: the bearers of this light resembling lanterns compact of leaves from old Geneva bibles; which invention, Sir Humphrey Edwin,* during his mayoralty, of happy memory, highly approved and advanced; affirming the Scripture to be now fulfilled, where it says, Thy word is a lantern to my feet, and a light to my paths.

Now, the art of canting consists in skilfully adapting the voice to whatever words the spirit delivers, that each may strike the ears of the audience with its most significant cadence. The force or energy of this eloquence is not to be found, as among ancient orators, in the disposition of words to a sentence, or the turning of long periods; but, agreeably to the modern refinements in music, is taken up wholly in dwelling and dilating upon syllables and letters. Thus, it is frequent for a single vowel to draw sighs from a multitude, and for a whole assembly of saints to sob to the music of one solitary liquid. But these are trifles, when even sounds inarticulate are observed to produce as forcible effects. A master workman shall blow his nose so powerfully as to pierce the hearts of his people, who were disposed to receive the excrements of his brain with the same reverence as the issue of it. Hawking, spitting, and belching, the defects of other men's rhetoric, are the flowers, and figures, and ornaments of his. For the spirit being the

* A Presbyterian, who, when Lord Mayor of London, went in his official character to a Meeting-house.

same in all, it is of no import through what vehicle it is conveyed.

It is a point of too much difficulty to draw the principles of this famous art within the compass of certain adequate rules. However, perhaps I may one day oblige the world with my critical essay upon the art of canting; philosophically, physically, and musically considered.

But, among all improvements of the spirit, wherein the voice has borne a part, there is none to be compared with that of conveying the sound through the nose, which, under the denomination of snuffling, has passed with so great applause in the world. The originals of this institution are very dark: but, having been initiated into the mystery of it, and leave being given me to publish it to the world, I shall deliver as direct a relation as I can.

This art, like many other famous inventions, owed its birth, or at least improvement and perfection, to an effect of chance; but was established upon solid reasons, and has flourished in this island ever since with great lustre. All agree that it first appeared upon the decay and discouragement of bagpipes, which, having long suffered under the mortal hatred of the brethren, tottered for a time, and at last fell with monarchy. The story is thus related.

As yet snuffling was not, when the following adventure happened to a Banbury saint. Upon a certain day, while he was far engaged among the tabernacles of the wicked, he felt the outward man put into odd commotions, and strangely pricked forward by the inward; an effect very usual among the modern inspired. For some think that the spirit is apt to feed on the flesh, like hungry wines upon raw beef. Others rather believe there is a perpetual game at leap-frog between both; and sometimes the flesh is uppermost, and sometimes the spirit; adding that the

former, while it is in the state of a rider, wears huge Rippon spurs; and, when it comes to the turn of being bearer, is wonderfully headstrong and hard-mouthed. However it came about, the saint felt his vessel full extended in every part; (a very natural effect of strong inspiration); and the place and time falling out so unluckily that he could not have the convenience of evacuating upwards, by repetition, prayer, or lecture, he was forced to open an inferior vent. In short, he wrestled with the flesh so long, that he at length subdued it, coming off with honourable wounds all before. The surgeon had now cured the parts primarily affected; but the disease, driven from its post, flew up into his head; and, as a skilful general, valiantly attacked in his trenches, and beaten from the field, by flying marches withdraws to the capital city, breaking down the bridges to prevent pursuit; so the disease, repelled from its first station, fled before the rod of Hermes to the upper region, there fortifying itself; but, finding the foe making attacks at the nose, broke down the bridge and retired to the head-quarters. Now, the naturalists observe that there is in human noses an idiosyncrasy, by virtue of which, the more the passage is obstructed, the more our speech delights to go through, as the music of a flageolot is made by the stops. By this method the twang of the nose becomes perfectly to resemble the snuffle of a bagpipe, and is found to be equally attractive of British ears; whereof the saint had sudden experience, by practising his new faculty with wonderful success, in the operation of the spirit; for in a short time, no doctrine passed for sound and orthodox unless it were delivered through the nose. Straight every pastor copied after this original; and those who could not otherwise arrive to a perfection, spirited by a noble zeal, made use of the same experiment to acquire it; so that, I think, it may

be truly affirmed the saints owe their empire to the snuffling of one animal, as Darius did his to the neighing of another; and both stratagems were performed by the same art; for we read how the Persian beast acquired his faculty by covering a mare the day before.

I should now have done, if I were not convinced that whatever I have yet advanced upon this subject is liable to great exception. For, allowing all I have said to be true, it may still be justly objected that there is in the commonwealth of artificial enthusiasm some real foundation for art to work upon in the temper and complexion of individuals, which other mortals seem to want. Observe but the gesture, the motion, and the countenance of some choice professors, though in their most familiar actions, you will find them of a different race from the rest of human creatures. Remark your commonest pretender to a light within, how dark, and dirty, and gloomy he is without; as lanterns, which, the more light they bear in their bodies, cast out so much the more soot, and smoke, and fuliginous matter to adhere to the sides. Listen but to their ordinary talk, and look on the mouth that delivers it, you will imagine you are hearing some ancient oracle, and your understanding will be equally informed. Upon these, and the like reasons, certain objectors pretend to put it beyond all doubt that there must be a sort of preternatural spirit possessing the heads of the modern saints; and some will have it to be the heat of zeal working upon the dregs of ignorance, as other spirits are produced from lees by the force of fire. Some again think, that when our earthly tabernacles are disordered and desolate, shaken and out of repair, the spirit delights to dwell within them; as houses are said to be haunted when they are forsaken and gone to decay.

To set this matter in as fair a light as possible, I shall here very briefly deduce the history of fanaticism from the most early ages to the present. And if we are able to fix upon any one material or fundamental point, wherein the chief professors have universally agreed, I think we may reasonably lay hold on that, and assign it for the great seed or principle of the spirit.

The most early traces we meet with of fanatics in ancient story are among the Egyptains, who instituted those rites known in Greece by the names of Orgia, Panegyres, and Dionysia; whether introduced there by Orpheus or Melampus we shall not dispute at present, nor in all likelihood at any time for the future. These feasts were celebrated to the honour of Osiris, whom the Grecians called Dionysius, and is the same with Bacchus: which has betrayed some superficial readers to imagine that the whole business was nothing more than a set of roaring, scouring companions, overcharged with wine; but this is a scandalous mistake, foisted on the world by a sort of modern authors, who have too literal an understanding; and, because antiquity is to be traced backwards, do therefore, like Jews, begin their books at the wrong end, as if learning were a sort of conjuring. These are the men who pretend to understand a book by scouring through the index; as if a traveller should go about to describe a palace, when he had seen nothing but the privy; or like certain fortune-tellers in Northern America, who have a way of reading a man's destiny by peeping into his breech. For, at the time of instituting these mysteries, there was not one vine in all Egypt, the natives drinking nothing but ale; which liquor seems to have been far more ancient than wine, and has the honour of owing its invention and progress, not only to the Egyptian Osiris, but to the Grecian Bacchus; who, in

their famous expedition, carried the receipt of it along with them, and gave it to the nations they visited or subdued. Besides, Bacchus himself was very seldom or never drunk; for it is recorded of him that he was the first inventor of the mitre, which he wore continually on his head (as the whole company of bacchanals did), to prevent vapours and the headache after hard drinking. And for this reason, say some, the scarlet whore, when she makes the kings of the earth drunk with her cup of abomination, is always sober herself, though she never balks the glass in her turn, being, it seems, kept upon her legs by the virtue of her triple mitre. Now these feasts were instituted in imitation of the famous expedition Osiris made through the world, and of the company that attended him, whereof the bacchanalian ceremonies were so many types and symbols. From which account it is manifest that the fanatic rites of these bacchanals cannot be imputed to intoxications by wine, but must needs have had a deeper foundation. What this was, we may gather large hints from certain circumstances in the course of their mysteries. For, in the first place, there was, in their processions, an entire mixture and confusion of sexes; they affected to ramble about hills and deserts; their garlands were of ivy and vine, emblems of cleaving and clinging; or of fir, the parent of turpentine. It is added that they imitated satyrs, were attended by goats, and rode upon asses, all companions of great skill and practice in affairs of gallantry. They bore for their ensigns certain curious figures, perched upon long poles, made into the shape and size of the *virga genitalis*, with its appurtenances; which were so many shadows and emblems of the whole mystery, as well as trophies set up by the female conquerors. Lastly, in a certain town of Attica, the whole solemnity, stripped of all

its types, was performed *in puris naturalibus*, the votaries not flying in coveys, but sorted into couples. The same may be further conjectured from the death of Orpheus, one of the institutors of these mysteries, who was torn in pieces by women, because he refused to communicate his orgies to them; which others explained by telling us he had castrated himself upon grief for the loss of his wife.

Omitting many others of less note, the next fanatics we meet with of any eminence were the numerous sects of heretics appearing in the five first centuries of the Christian era, from Simon Magus and his followers to those of Eutyches. I have collected their systems from infinite reading, and, comparing them with those of their successors in the several ages since, I find there are certain bounds set even to the irregularity of human thought, and those a great deal narrower than is commonly apprehended. For, as they all frequently interfere even in their wildest ravings, so there is one fundamental point wherein they are sure to meet, as lines in a centre, and that is, the community of women. Great were their solicitudes in this matter, and they never failed of certain articles, in their schemes of worship, on purpose to establish it.

The last fanatics of note were those which started up in Germany a little after the reformation of Luther, springing as mushrooms do at the end of a harvest; such were John of Leyden, David George, Adam Neuster, and many others, whose visions and revelations always terminated in leading about half-a-dozen sisters a-piece, and making that practice a fundamental part of their system. For human life is a continual navigation, and if we expect our vessels to pass with safety through the waves and tempests of this fluctuating world, it is necessary to make a good provision

of the flesh, as seamen lay in store of beef for a long voyage.

Now, from this brief survey of some principal sects among the fanatics in all ages (having omitted the Mahometans and others, who might also help to confirm the argument I am about), to which I might add several among ourselves, such as the family of love, sweet singers of Israel, and the like; and, from reflecting upon that fundamental point in their doctrines about women wherein they have so unanimously agreed, I am apt to imagine that the seed or principle which has ever put men upon visions in things invisible is of a corporeal nature; for the profounder chemists inform us that the strongest spirits may be extracted from human flesh. Besides, the spinal marrow, being nothing else but a continuation of the brain, must needs create a very free communication between the superior faculties and those below; and thus the thorn in the flesh serves for a spur to the spirit. I think it is agreed among physicians that nothing affects the head so much as a tentiginous humour, repelled and elated to the upper region, found, by daily practice, to run frequently up into madness. A very eminent member of the faculty assured me that when the Quakers first appeared he seldom was without some female patients among them for the *furor*—; persons of a visionary devotion, either men or women, are, in their complexion, of all others, the most amorous; for zeal is frequently kindled from the same spark with other fires, and, from inflaming brotherly love, will proceed to raise that of a gallant. If we inspect into the usual process of modern courtship, we shall find it to consist in a devout turn of the eyes, called ogling; an artificial form of canting and whining by rote, every interval, for want of other matter, made up with a shrug or

a hum, a sigh, or a groan; the style compact of insignificant words, incoherences, and repetition. These I take to be the most accomplished rules of address to a mistress; and where are these performed with more dexterity than by the saints? Nay, to bring this argument yet closer, I have been informed by certain sanguine brethren of the first class, that in the height and orgasmus of their spiritual exercise, it has been frequent with them . . .; immediately after which, they found the spirit to relax and flag of a sudden with the nerves, and they were forced to hasten to a conclusion. This may be further strengthened by observing, with wonder, how unaccountably all females are attracted by visionary or enthusiastic preachers, though ever so contemptible in their outward mien; which is usually supposed to be done upon considerations purely spiritual, without any carnal regards at all. But I have reason to think the sex has certain characteristics, by which they form a truer judgment of human abilities and performings than we ourselves can possibly do of each other. Let that be as it will, thus much is certain, that, however spiritual intrigues begin, they generally conclude like all others: they may branch upward toward heaven, but the root is in the earth. Too intense a contemplation is not the business of flesh and blood; it must, by the necessary course of things, in a little time let go its hold, and fall into matter. Lovers for the sake of celestial converse are but another sort of Platonics, who pretend to see stars and heaven in ladies' eyes, and to look or think no lower; but the same pit is provided for both; and they seem a perfect moral to the story of that philosopher, who, while his thoughts and eyes were fixed upon the constellations, found himself seduced by his lower parts into a ditch.

I had somewhat more to say upon this part of the subject; but the post is just going, which forces me in great haste to conclude, Sir, yours, etc.

*Pray burn this letter as soon as it comes to your hands.*

# MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

# AN ARGUMENT

TO PROVE THAT THE ABOLISHING OF

# CHRISTIANITY IN ENGLAND

MAY, AS THINGS NOW STAND, BE ATTENDED WITH SOME INCONVENIENCES, AND PERHAPS NOT PRODUCE THOSE MANY GOOD EFFECTS PROPOSED THEREBY.

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I AM very sensible what a weakness and presumption it is to reason against the general humour and disposition of the world. I remember it was, with great justice, and due regard to the freedom both of the public and the press, forbidden, upon several penalties, to write, or discourse, or lay wagers against the Union, even before it was confirmed by parliament; because that was looked upon as a design to oppose the current of the people, which, beside the folly of it, is a manifest breach of the fundamental law, that makes this majority of opinion the voice of God. In like manner, and for the very same reasons, it may perhaps be neither safe nor prudent to argue against the abolishing of Christianity, at a juncture when all parties appear so unanimously determined upon the point, as we cannot but allow from their actions, their discourses, and their writings. However, I know not how, whether from the affectation of singularity, or the perverseness of human nature, but so it unhappily falls out, that I cannot be entirely of this opinion. Nay, though I were sure an order were issued for my immediate prosecution by the attorney-general, I

should still confess that, in the present posture of our affairs at home or abroad, I do not yet see the absolute necessity of extirpating the Christian religion from among us.

This, perhaps, may appear too great a paradox even for our wise and paradoxical age to endure; therefore I shall handle it with all tenderness, and with the utmost deference to that great and profound majority which is of another sentiment.

And yet the curious may please to observe how much the genius of a nation is liable to alter in half an age. I have heard it affirmed for certain, by some very old people, that the contrary opinion was, even in their memories, as much in vogue as the other is now; and that a project for the abolishing of Christianity would then have appeared as singular, and been thought as absurd, as it would be, at this time, to write or discourse in its defence.

Therefore I freely own that all appearances are against me. The system of the gospel, after the fate of other systems, is generally antiquated and exploded: and the mass or body of the common people, among whom it seems to have had its latest credit, are now grown as much ashamed of it as their betters; opinions like fashions always descending from those of quality to the middle sort, and thence to the vulgar, where at length they are dropped and vanish.

But here I would not be mistaken, and must therefore be so bold as to borrow a distinction from the writers on the other side, when they make a difference between nominal and real Trinitarians. I hope no reader imagines me so weak to stand up in the defence of real Christianity, such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's belief and actions: to offer at the restoring of that would indeed be a

wild project; it would be to dig up foundations; to destroy at one blow all the wit and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and constitution of things; to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences, with the professors of them; in short, to turn our courts, exchanges, and shops into deserts; and would be full as absurd as the proposal of Horace, where he advises the Romans all in a body to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.

Therefore I think this caution was in itself altogether unnecessary (which I have inserted only to prevent all possibility of cavilling), since every candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be intended only in defence of nominal Christianity; the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent, as utterly inconsistent with our present schemes of wealth and power.

But why we should therefore cast off the name and title of Christians, although the general opinion and resolution be so violent for it, I confess I cannot (with submission) apprehend, nor is the consequence necessary. However, since the undertakers propose such wonderful advantages to the nation by this project, and advance many plausible objections against the system of Christianity, I shall briefly consider the strength of both, fairly allow them their greatest weight, and offer such answers as I think most reasonable. After which I will beg leave to show what inconveniences may possibly happen by such an innovation, in the present posture of our affairs.

First, one great advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity is, that it would very much enlarge and establish liberty of conscience, that great bulwark of our nation, and of the Protestant religion; which is still too much

limited by priestcraft, notwithstanding all the good intentions of the legislature, as we have lately found by a severe instance. For it is confidently reported that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of causes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the least tincture of learning, having made a discovery that there was no God, and generously communicating their thoughts for the good of the public, were some time ago, by an unparalleled severity, and upon I know not what obsolete law, broke for blasphemy. And as it has been wisely observed, if persecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach or where it will end.

In answer to all which, with deference to wiser judgments, I think this rather shows the necessity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with the highest objects; and if they cannot be allowed a God to revile or renounce, they will speak evil of dignities, abuse the government, and reflect upon the ministry; which I am sure few will deny to be of much more pernicious consequence, according to the saying of Tiberius, *deorum offensa diis curæ*. As to the particular fact related, I think it is not fair to argue from one instance, perhaps another cannot be produced: yet (to the comfort of all those who may be apprehensive of persecution) blasphemy, we know, is freely spoken a million of times in every coffee-house and tavern, or wherever else good company meet. It must be allowed, indeed, that, to break an English free-born officer only for blasphemy was, to speak the gentlest of such an action, a very high strain of absolute power. Little can be said in excuse for the general: perhaps he was afraid it might give offence to the allies, among whom, for aught we know, it may be the custom of the country to believe a God. But if

he argued, as some have done, upon a mistaken principle, that an officer who is guilty of speaking blasphemy may some time or other proceed so far as to raise a mutiny, the consequence is by no means to be admitted; for surely the commander of an English army is likely to be but ill obeyed whose soldiers fear and reverence him as little as they do a Deity.

It is further objected against the gospel system, that it obliges men to the belief of things too difficult for free-thinkers, and such who have shaken off the prejudices that usually cling to a confined education. To which I answer, that men should be cautious how they raise objections which reflect upon the wisdom of the nation. Is not everybody freely allowed to believe whatever he pleases, and to publish his belief to the world whenever he thinks fit, especially if it serves to strengthen the party which is in the right? Would any indifferent foreigner, who should read the trumpery lately written by Asgil, Tindal, Toland, Coward, and forty more, imagine the gospel to be our rule of faith, and confirmed by parliaments? Does any man either believe, or say he believes, or desire to have it thought that he says he believes, one syllable of the matter? And is any man worse received upon that score, or does he find his want of nominal faith a disadvantage to him in the pursuit of any civil or military employment? What if there be an old dormant statute or two against him, are they not now obsolete to a degree, that Epsom and Dudley themselves, if they were now alive, would find it impossible to put them in execution?

It is likewise urged that there are, by computation, in this kingdom, above ten thousand parsons, whose revenues, added to those of my lords the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure,

and freethinking, enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court and town: and then again, so great a number of able divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This, indeed, appears to be a consideration of some weight; but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise: as first, whether it may not be thought necessary that in certain tracts of country, like what we call parishes, there shall be one man at least of abilities to read and write. Then it seems a wrong computation, that the revenues of the church throughout this island would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the present refined way of living; that is, to allow each of them such a rent as, in the modern form of speech, would make them easy. But still there is in this project a greater mischief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly, who killed the hen that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray what would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrofulous, consumptive productions furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when, having squandered away their vigour, health, and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten thousand persons reduced, by the wise regulations of Henry VIII., to the necessity of a low diet and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hospital.

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity, is the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the kingdom one-seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure; besides

the loss to the public of so many stately structures, now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, market-houses, exchanges, common dormitories, and other public edifices.

I hope I shall be forgiven a hard word, if I call this a perfect *cavil.* I readily own there has been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every Sunday, and that shops are still frequently shut, in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate-houses? are not the taverns and coffee-houses open? can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physic? are fewer claps got upon Sundays than other days? is not that the chief day for traders to sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? where more care to appear in the foremost box, with greater advantage of dress? where more meetings for business? where more bargains driven of all sorts? and where so many conveniences or encitements to sleep?

There is one advantage greater than any of the foregoing proposed by the abolishing of Christianity; that it will utterly extinguish parties among us, by removing those factious distinctions of high and low church, of Whig and Tory, Presbyterian and Church of England, which are now so many grievous clogs upon public proceedings, and are apt to dispose men to prefer the gratifying of themselves, or depressing of their adversaries, before the most important interests of the state.

I confess, if it were certain that so great an advantage would redound to the nation by this expedient, I would submit and be silent; but will any man say that, if the words *whoring*, *drinking*, *cheating*, *lying*, *stealing* were, by act of parliament, ejected out of the English tongue and dictionaries, we should all awake next morning chaste and temperate, honest and just, and lovers of truth? Is this a fair consequence? Or, if the physicians would forbid us to pronounce the words *pox*, *gout*, *rheumatism*, and *stone*, would that expedient serve, like so many talismans, to destroy the diseases themselves? Are party and faction rooted in men's hearts no deeper than phrases borrowed from religion, or founded upon no firmer principles? and is our language so poor that we cannot find other terms to express them? Are *envy*, *pride*, *avarice*, and *ambition* such ill nomenclators, that they cannot furnish appellations for their owners? Will not *heydukes*, and *mamalukes*, *mandarins*, and *patshaws*, or any other words formed at pleasure, serve to distinguish those who are in the ministry, from others, who would be in it if they could? What, for instance, is easier than to vary the form of speech, and instead of the word church make it a question in politics whether the monument be in danger? Because religion was nearest at hand to furnish a few convenient phrases, is our invention so barren, we can find no other? Suppose, for argument sake, that the Tories favoured Margarita, the Whigs Mrs. Tofts, and the trimmers Valentini; would not *Margaritians*, *Toftians*, and *Valentinians* be very tolerable marks of distinction? The *Prasini* and *Veniti*, two most virulent factions in Italy, began (if I remember right) by a distinction of colours in ribbons; and we might contend with as good a grace about the dignity of the *blue* and the *green*, which would

serve as properly to divide the court, the parliament, and the kingdom between them as any terms of art whatsoever borrowed from religion. And therefore I think there is little force in this objection against Christianity, or prospect of so great an advantage, as is proposed in the abolishing of it.

It is again objected, as a very absurd, ridiculous custom, that a set of men should be suffered, much less employed and hired, to bawl one day in seven against the lawfulness of those methods most in use, toward the pursuit of greatness, riches, and pleasure, which are the constant practice of all men alive on the other six. But this objection is, I think, a little unworthy of so refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly: I appeal to the breast of any polite free-thinker, whether, in the pursuit of gratifying a predominant passion, he has not always felt a wonderful incitement, by reflecting it was a thing forbidden; and therefore we see, in order to cultivate this taste, the wisdom of the nation has taken special care that the ladies should be furnished with prohibited silks, and the men with prohibited wine. And indeed it were to be wished that some other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleasures of the town; which for want of such expedients begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the spleen.

It is likewise proposed as a great advantage to the public, that if we once discard the system of the gospel, all religion will of course be banished for ever; and consequently along with it those grievous prejudices of education, which under the names of *virtue*, *conscience*, *honour*, *justice*, and the like, are so apt to disturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are so hard to be

eradicated, by right reason or free-thinking, sometimes during the whole course of our lives.

Here first I observe, how difficult it is to get rid of a phrase which the world is once grown fond of, though the occasion that first produced it be entirely taken away. For several years past, if a man had but an ill-favoured nose, the deep-thinkers of the age would some way or other contrive to impute the cause to the prejudice of his education. From this fountain were said to be derived all our foolish notions of justice, piety, love of our country; all our opinions of God or a future state, heaven, hell, and the like; and there might formerly, perhaps, have been some pretence for this charge. But so effectual care has been taken to remove those prejudices by an entire change in the methods of education, that (with honour I mention it to our polite innovators) the young gentlemen who are now on the scene seem to have not the least tincture of those infusions, or string of those weeds; and by consequence, the reason for abolishing nominal Christianity upon that pretext is wholly ceased.

For the rest, it may perhaps admit a controversy whether the banishing of all notions of religion whatsoever would be convenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the least of opinion with those who hold religion to have been the invention of politicians to keep the lower part of the world in awe, by the fear of invisible powers; unless mankind were then very different to what it is now: for I look upon the mass or body of our people here in England to be as free-thinkers, that is to say, as staunch unbelievers, as any of the highest rank. But I conceive some scattered notions about a superior power to be of singular use for the common people, as furnishing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peevish,

and providing topics of amusement in a tedious winter-night.

Lastly, it is proposed as a singular advantage, that the abolishing of Christianity will very much contribute to the uniting of Protestants, by enlarging the terms of communion, so as to take in all sorts of dissenters, who are now shut out of the pale upon account of a few ceremonies, which all sides confess to be things indifferent; that this alone will effectually answer the great ends of a scheme for comprehension, by opening a large noble gate, at which all bodies may enter; whereas the chaffering with dissenters, and dodging about this or the other ceremony, is but like opening a few wickets, and leaving them at jar, by which no more than one can get in at a time, and that not without stooping, and sideling, and squeezing his body.

To all this I answer, that there is one darling inclination of mankind which usually affects to be a retainer to religion, though she be neither its parent, its godmother, or its friend; I mean the spirit of opposition, that lived long before Christianity, and can easily subsist without it. Let us, for instance, examine wherein the opposition of sectaries among us consists; we shall find Christianity to have no share in it at all. Does the gospel anywhere prescribe a starched, squeezed countenance, a stiff formal gait, a singularity of manners and habit, or any affected modes of speech, different from the reasonable part of mankind? Yet, if Christianity did not lend its name to stand in the gap, and to employ or divert these humours, they must of necessity be spent in contraventions to the laws of the land, and disturbance of the public peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm assigned to every nation, which, if it has not proper objects to work on, will burst out and set all in a flame. If the quiet of a state can be

bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would refuse. Let the mastiffs amuse themselves about a sheep's skin stuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock. The institution of convents abroad seems in one point a strain of great wisdom; there being few irregularities in human passions that may not have recourse to vent themselves in some of those orders, which are so many retreats for the speculative, the melancholy, the proud, the silent, the politic, and the morose, to spend themselves, and evaporate the noxious particles; for each of whom we in this island are forced to provide a several sect of religion, to keep them quiet; and whenever Christianity shall be abolished, the legislature must find some other expedient to employ and entertain them. For what imports it how large a gate you open, if there will be always left a number, who place a pride and a merit in refusing to enter?

Having thus considered the most important objections against Christianity, and the chief advantages proposed by the abolishing thereof, I shall now, with equal deference and submission to wiser judgments, as before, proceed to mention a few inconveniences that may happen, if the gospel should be repealed, which perhaps the projectors may not have sufficiently considered.

And first, I am very sensible how much the gentlemen of wit and pleasure are apt to murmur, and be choked at the sight of so many daggled-tail parsons, who happen to fall in their way and offend their eyes; but, at the same time, these wise reformers do not consider what an advantage and felicity it is for great wits to be always provided with objects of scorn and contempt, in order to exercise and improve their talents, and divert their spleen from falling on each other or on themselves;

especially when all this may be done without the least imaginable danger to their persons.

And to urge another argument of a parallel nature: if Christianity were once abolished, how could the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject, so calculated in all points, whereon to display their abilities? what wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those whose genius, by continual practice, has been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject? we are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greatest, perhaps the only, topic we have left? Who would ever have suspected Asgil for a wit, or Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? what other subject, through all art or nature, could have produced Tindal for a profound author, or furnished him with readers? it is the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer. For had a hundred such pens as these been employed on the side of religion, they would have immediately sunk into silence and oblivion.

Nor do I think it wholly groundless, or my fears altogether imaginary, that the abolishing Christianity may perhaps bring the church into danger, or at least put the senate to the trouble of another securing vote. I desire I may not be mistaken; I am far from presuming to affirm or think that the church is in danger at present, or as things now stand; but we know not how soon it may be so, when the Christian religion is repealed. As plausible as this project seems, there may be a dangerous design lurking

under it. Nothing can be more notorious than that the atheists, deists, socinians, anti-trinitarians, and other sub-divisions of free-thinkers, are persons of little zeal for the present ecclesiastical establishment; their declared opinion is for repealing the sacramental test; they are very indifferent with regard to ceremonies, nor do they hold the *jus divinum* of episcopacy; therefore this may be intended as one politic step toward altering the constitution of the church established, and setting up presbytery in the stead, which I leave to be further considered by those at the helm.

In the last place, I think nothing can be more plain than that, by this expedient, we shall run into the evil we chiefly pretend to avoid, and that the abolishment of the Christian religion will be the readiest course we can take to introduce popery. And I am the more inclined to this opinion, because we know it has been the constant practice of the Jesuits to send over emissaries with instructions to personate themselves members of the several prevailing sects among us. So it is recorded that they have at sundry times appeared in the disguise of presbyterians, anabaptists, independents, and quakers, according as any of these were most in credit; so, since the fashion has been taken up of exploding religion, the popish missionaries have not been wanting to mix with the free-thinkers; among whom Toland, the great oracle of the anti-christians, is an Irish priest, the son of an Irish priest, and the most learned and ingenious author of a book called "The Rights of the Christian Church," was in a proper juncture reconciled to the Romish faith, whose true son, as appears by a hundred passages in his treatise, he still continues. Perhaps I could add some others to the number, but the fact is beyond dispute, and the reasoning they proceed by is right; for, supposing Christianity to be extinguished, the people will never be at

ease till they find out some other method of worship, which will as infallibly produce superstition, as superstition will end in popery.

And therefore if, notwithstanding all I have said, it still be thought necessary to have a bill brought in for repealing Christianity, I would humbly offer an amendment, that instead of the word Christianity, may be put religion in general, which, I conceive, will much better answer all the good ends proposed by the projectors of it. For, as long as we leave in being a God and his providence, with all the necessary consequences which curious and inquisitive men will be apt to draw from such premises, we do not strike at the root of the evil, though we should ever so effectually annihilate the present scheme of the gospel: for of what use is freedom of thought, if it will not produce freedom of action? which is the sole end, how remote soever in appearance, of all objections against Christianity; and therefore the free-thinkers consider it as a sort of edifice, wherein all the parts have such a mutual dependence on each other, that if you happen to pull out one single nail, the whole fabric must fall to the ground. This was happily expressed by him, who had heard of a text brought for proof of the Trinity, which in an ancient manuscript was differently read; he thereupon immediately took the hint, and by a sudden deduction of a long *sorites* most logically concluded —"Why, if it be as you say, I may safely whore and drink on, and defy the parson." From which, and many the like instances easy to be produced, I think nothing can be more manifest than that the quarrel is not against any particular points of hard digestion in the Christian system, but against religion in general; which, by laying restraints on human nature, is supposed the great enemy to the freedom of thought and action.

Upon the whole, if it shall still be thought for the benefit of church and state that Christianity be abolished, I conceive, however, it may be more convenient to defer the execution to a time of peace, and not venture, in this conjuncture, to disoblige our allies, who, as it falls out, are all Christians, and many of them, by the prejudices of their education, so bigoted as to place a sort of pride in the appellation. If, upon being rejected by them, we are to trust to an alliance with the Turk, we shall find ourselves much deceived: for, as he is too remote, and generally engaged in war with the Persian Emperor, so his people would be more scandalised at our infidelity than our Christian neighbours. For the Turks are not only strict observers of religious worship, but, what is worse, believe a God; which is more than is required of us, even while we preserve the name of Christians.

To conclude: whatever some may think of the great advantages to trade by this favourite scheme, I do very much apprehend that, in six months time after the act is passed for the extirpation of the gospel, the Bank and East India stock may fall at least one *per cent.* And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preservation of Christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss, merely for the sake of destroying it.

# PROPOSALS FOR PRINTING A VERY CURIOUS DISCOURSE,

ENTITLED

# THE ART OF POLITICAL LYING.

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[Though stated to have been sent to him by Dr. Arbuthnot, it is probable that Swift had a considerable share in this humorous title piece, it having passed through his hands to the press. He thus speaks of it in his "Journal to Stella" of Oct. 9, and Dec. 12, 1712:—

"Arbuthnot has sent me, from Windsor, a pretty discourse upon lying; and I have ordered the printer to come for it. It is a proposal for publishing a curious piece, called, 'The Art of Political Lying,' in two volumes, etc., and then there is an abstract of the first volume, just like those pamphlets which they call 'The Works of the Learned.'

"The pamphlet of Political Lying is written by Dr. Arbuthnot, the author of 'John Bull.' It is very pretty, but not so obvious to be understood."]

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There is now in the press a curious piece, entitled Ψευδολογία Πολιτική; or, "The Art of Political Lying," consisting of two volumes in quarto.

THE PROPOSALS ARE:

I. That if the author meets with suitable encouragement, he intends to deliver the first volume to the subscribers by Hilary Term next.

II. The price of both volumes will be, to the subscribers,

14s., 7s. whereof are to be paid down, and the other 7s. at the delivery of the second volume.

III. Those that subscribe for six, shall have a seventh gratis; which reduces the price to less than 6s. a volume.

IV. That the subscribers shall have their names and places of abode printed at length.

For the encouragement of so useful a work, it is thought fit the public should be informed of the contents of the first volume, by one who has with great care perused the manuscript.

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## "THE ART OF POLITICAL LYING."

THE author, in his preface, makes some very judicious reflections upon the original of arts and sciences: that at first they consist of scattered theorems and practices, which are handed about among the masters, and only revealed to the *filii artis*, till such time as some great genius appears, who collects these disjointed propositions, and reduces them into a regular system. That this is the case of that noble and useful art of political lying, which in this last age having been enriched with several new discoveries, ought not to lie any longer in rubbish and confusion, but may justly claim a place in the "Encyclopædia," especially such as serves for a model of education for an able politician. That he proposes to himself no small stock of fame in future ages, in being the first who has undertaken this design; and for the same reason he hopes the imperfection of his work will be excused. He invites all persons who have any talents that way, or any new discovery, to communicate their thoughts, assuring them that honourable mention shall be made of them in his work.

THE FIRST VOLUME CONSISTS OF ELEVEN CHAPTERS.

In the first chapter of his excellent treatise he reasons philosophically concerning the nature of the soul of man, and those qualities which render it susceptible of lies. He supposes the soul to be of the nature of a plano-cylindrical speculum, or looking-glass; that the plain side was made by God Almighty, but that the devil afterwards wrought the other side into a cylindrical figure. The plain side represents objects just as they are; and the cylindrical side, by the rules of catoptrics, must needs represent true objects false, and false objects true; but the cylindrical side being much the larger surface, takes in a greater compass of visual rays. That upon the cylindrical side of the soul of man depends the whole art and success of political lying. The author, in this chapter, proceeds to reason upon the qualities of the mind: as its peculiar fondness of the malicious and the miraculous. The tendency of the soul toward the malicious, springs from self-love, or a pleasure to find mankind more wicked, base, or unfortunate than ourselves. The design of the miraculous proceeds from the inactivity of the soul, or its incapacity to be moved or delighted with anything that is vulgar or common. The author having established the qualities of the mind, upon which his art is founded, he proceeds—

In his second chapter, to treat of the nature of political lying; which he defines to be, the art of convincing the people of salutary falsehoods for some good end. He calls it an art to distinguish it from that of telling truth, which does not seem to want art; but then he would have this understood only as to the invention, because there is indeed more art necessary to convince the people of a salutary truth than a salutary falsehood. Then he proceeds to prove

that there are salutary falsehoods, of which he gives a great many instances, both before and after the Revolution; and demonstrates plainly, that we could not have carried on the war so long without several of those salutary falsehoods. He gives rules to calculate the value of a political lie, in pounds, shillings, and pence. By good, he does not mean that which is absolutely so, but what appears so to the artist, which is a sufficient ground for him to proceed upon; and he distinguishes the good, as it commonly is, into *bonum utile, dulce et honestum.* He shows you that there are political lies of a mixed nature, which include all the three in different respects; that the *utile* reigns generally about the exchange, the *dulce* and *honestum* at the Westminster end of the town. One man spreads a lie to sell or buy stock to greater advantage; a second, because it is honourable to serve his party; and a third, because it is sweet to gratify his revenge. Having explained the several terms of his definition, he proceeds—

In his third chapter, to treat of the lawfulness of political lying; which he deduces from its true and genuine principles, by inquiring into the several rights that mankind have to truth. He shows that people have a right to private truth from their neighbours, and economical truth from their own family; that they should not be abused by their wives, children, and servants; but that they have no right at all to political truth; that the people may as well all pretend to be lords of manors, and possess great estates, as to have truth told them in matters of government. The author, with great judgment, states the several shares of mankind in this matter of truth, according to their several capacities, dignities, and professions; and shows you that children have hardly any share at all; in consequence of which, they have very seldom any truth told them. It

must be owned that the author, in this chapter, has some seeming difficulties to answer, and texts of scripture to explain.

The fourth chapter is wholly employed in this question, "Whether the right of coinage of political lies be wholly in the government?" The author, who is a true friend to English liberty, determines in the negative, and answers all the arguments of the opposite party with great acuteness: that, as the government of England has a mixture of democratical in it, so the right of inventing and spreading political lies is partly in the people; and their obstinate adherence to this just privilege has been most conspicuous, and shined with great lustre of late years: that it happens very often that there are no other means left to the good people of England to pull down a ministry and government they are weary of but by exercising this their undoubted right: that abundance of political lying is a sure sign of true English liberty: that as ministers do sometimes use tools to support their power, it is but reasonable that the people should employ the same weapon to defend themselves, and pull them down.

In his fifth chapter, he divides political lies into several species and classes, and gives precepts about the inventing, spreading, and propagating the several sorts of them: he begins with the *rumores* and *libelli famosi*, such as concern the reputation of men in power; where he finds fault with the common mistake, that takes notice only of one sort, viz., the detractory or defamatory; whereas in truth there are three sorts, the detractory, the additory, and the translatory. The additory gives to a great man a larger share of reputation than belongs to him, to enable him to serve some good end or purpose. The detractory, or defamatory, is a lie which takes from a great man the reputation that justly

belongs to him, for fear he should use it to the detriment of the public. The translatory is a lie, that transfers the merit of a man's good action to another, who is in himself more deserving; or transfers the demerit of a bad action from the true author to a person who is in himself less deserving. He gives several instances of very great strokes in all the three kinds, especially in the last, when it was necessary, for the good of the public, to bestow the valour and conduct of one man upon another, and that of many to one man: nay even, upon a good occasion, a man may be robbed of his victory by a person that did not command in the action. The restoring and destroying the public may be ascribed to persons who had no hand in either. The author exhorts all gentlemen practitioners to exercise themselves in the translatory, because the existence of the things themselves being visible, and not demanding any proof, there wants nothing to be put upon the public, but a false author, or a false cause; which is no great presumption upon the credulity of mankind, to whom the secret springs of things are for the most part unknown.

The author proceeds to give some precepts as to the additory; that when one ascribes anything to a person which does not belong to him, the lie ought to be calculated not quite contradictory to his known qualities; for example, one would not make the French king present at a Protestant conventicle; nor, like queen Elizabeth, restore the overplus of taxes to his subjects. One would not bring in the Emperor giving two months' pay in advance to his troops; nor the Dutch paying more than their quota. One would not make the same person zealous for a standing army, and public liberty; nor an atheist support the church; nor a lewd fellow a reformer of manners; nor a hot-headed, crack-brained coxcomb forward for a scheme of moderation. But,

if it is absolutely necessary that a person is to have some good adventitious quality given him, the author's precept is, that it should not be done at first *in extremo gradu.* For example, they should not make a covetous man give away all at once 5000*l.* in a charitable, generous way; 20*l.* or 30*l.* may suffice at first. They should not introduce a person of remarkable ingratitude to his benefactors, rewarding a poor man for some good office that was done him thirty years ago; but they may allow him to acknowledge a service to a person who is capable still to do him another. A man, whose personal courage is suspected, is not at first to drive whole squadrons before him; but he may be allowed the merit of some squabble, or throwing a bottle at his adversary's head.

It will not be allowed to make a great man that is a known despiser of religion spend whole days in his closet at his devotion; but you may with safety make him sit out public prayers with decency. A great man, who has never been known willingly to pay a just debt, ought not all of a sudden to be introduced making restitution of thousands he has cheated; let it suffice at first to pay 20*l.* to a friend who has lost his note.

He lays down the same rules in the detractory or defamatory kind; that they should not be quite opposite to the qualities the persons are supposed to have. Thus it will not be found according to the sound rules of pseudology to report of a pious and religious prince that he neglects his devotion, and would introduce heresy; but you may report of a merciful prince, that he has pardoned a criminal who did not deserve it. You will be unsuccessful if you give out of a great man, who is remarkable for his frugality for the public, that he squanders away the nation's money; but you may safely relate that he hoards it; you must not

affirm he took a bribe, but you may freely censure him for being tardy in his payments; because, though neither may be true, yet the last is credible, the first not. Of an open-hearted, generous minister, you are not to say that he was in an intrigue to betray his country; but you may affirm, with some probability, that he was in an intrigue with a lady. He warns all practitioners to take good heed to these precepts; for want of which many of their lies of late have proved abortive or short-lived.

In the sixth chapter, he treats of the miraculous; by which he understands anything that exceeds the common degrees of probability. In respect to the people, it is divided into two sorts, the τὸ φοβερὸν or the τὸ θυμοειδες, terrifying lies, and animating or encouraging lies; both being extremely useful on their proper occasions. Concerning the τὸ φοβερὸν he gives several rules; one of which is, that terrible objects should not be too frequently shown to the people lest they grow familiar. He says, it is absolutely necessary that the people of England should be frighted with the French king and the pretender once a-year; but that the bears should be chained up again till that time twelvemonth. The want of observing this so necessary a precept, in bringing out the raw head and bloody bones upon every trifling occasion, has produced great indifference in the vulgar of late years. As to the animating or encouraging lies, he gives the following rules: that they shall not far exceed the common degrees of probability; that there should be variety of them; and the same lie not obstinately insisted upon: that the promissory or prognosticating lies should not be upon short days, for fear the authors should have the shame and confusion to see themselves speedily contradicted. He examines, by these rules, that well-meant, but unfortunate lie of the conquest of

France which continued near twenty years together; but at last, by being too obstinately insisted upon, it was worn threadbare, and became unsuccessful.

As to the τὸ τερατώδες, or the prodigious, he has little to advise, but that their comets, whales, and dragons should be sizeable; their storms, tempests, and earthquakes, without the reach of a day's journey of a man and horse.

The seventh chapter is wholly taken up in an inquiry, which of the two parties are the greatest artists in political lying? He owns, that sometimes the one party, and sometimes the other, is better believed; but that they have both very good geniuses among them. He attributes the ill success of either party to their glutting the market, and retailing too much of a bad commodity at once: when there is too great a quantity of worms it is hard to catch gudgeons. He proposes a scheme for the recovery of the credit of any party, which indeed seems to be somewhat chimerical, and does not savour of that sound judgment the author has shown in the rest of the work. It amounts to this, that the party should agree to vent nothing but truth for three months together, which will give them credit for six months lying afterwards. He owns, that he believes it almost impossible to find fit persons to execute this scheme. Towards the end of the chapter he inveighs severely against the folly of parties, in retaining scoundrels and men of low genius to retail their lies; such as most of the present news-writers are; who, except a strong bent and inclination towards the profession, seem to be wholly ignorant in the rules of pseudology, and not at all qualified for so weighty a trust.

In his next chapter he treats of some extraordinary geniuses, who have appeared of late years, especially in their disposition towards the miraculous. He advises those

hopeful young men to turn their invention to the service of their country; it being inglorious, at this time, to employ their talent in prodigious fox-chases, horse-courses, feats of activity in driving of coaches, jumping, running, swallowing of peaches, pulling out whole sets of teeth to clean, etc., when their country stands in so much need of their assistance.

The eighth chapter is a project for uniting the several smaller corporations of liars into one society. It is too tedious to give a full account of the whole scheme; what is most remarkable is, that this society ought to consist of the heads of each party; that no lie is to pass current without their approbation, they being the best judges of the present exigencies, and what sorts of lies are demanded; that in such a corporation there ought to be men of all professions, that τὸ ὡρέπον, and the τὸ εὐλόγον, that is, decency and probability, may be observed as much as possible; that, besides the persons above mentioned, this society ought to consist of the hopeful geniuses about the town (of which there are great plenty to be picked up in the several coffee-houses), travellers, virtuosoes, fox-hunters, jockeys, attorneys, old seamen and soldiers out of the hospitals of Greenwich and Chelsea; to this society, so constituted, ought to be committed the sole management of lying; that in their outer room there ought always to attend some persons endowed with a great stock of credulity, a generation that thrives mightily in this soil and climate: he thinks a sufficient number of them may be picked up anywhere about the Exchange: these are to circulate what the others coin; for no man spreads a lie with so good a grace as he that believes it: that the rule of the society be to invent a lie, and sometimes two, for every day; in the choice of which great regard ought to be had to

the weather and the season of the year; your φοβερὰ, or terrifying lies, do mighty well in November and December, but not so well in May and June, unless the easterly winds reign: that it ought to be penal for anybody to talk of anything but the lie of the day: that the society is to maintain a sufficient number of spies at court, and other places, to furnish hints and topics for invention, and a general correspondence of all the market towns for circulating their lies: that if any one of the society were observed to blush, or look out of countenance, or want a necessary circumstance in telling the lie, he ought to be expelled, and declared incapable: besides the roaring lies, there ought to be a private committee for whisperers, constituted of the ablest men of the society. Here the author makes a digression in praise of the Whig party, for the right understanding and use of proof-lies. A proof-lie is like a proof-charge for a piece of ordnance, to try a standard credulity. Of such a nature he takes transubstantiation to be in the Church of Rome, a proof-article, which if any one swallows, they are sure he will digest everything else; therefore the Whig party do wisely, to try the credulity of the people sometimes by swingers, that they may be able to judge to what height they may charge them afterwards. Towards the end of this chapter, he warns the heads of parties against believing their own lies, which has proved of pernicious consequences of late; both a wise party, and a wise nation, having regulated their affairs upon lies of their own invention. The causes of this he supposed to be, too great a zeal and intenseness in the practice of this art, and a vehement heat in mutual conversation, whereby they persuade one another, that what they wish, and report to be true, is really so: that all parties have been subject to this misfortune. The

Jacobites have been constantly infested with it; but the Whigs of late seemed even to exceed them in this ill habit and weakness. To this chapter the author subjoins a calendar of lies, proper for several months of the year.

The ninth chapter treats of the celerity and duration of lies. As to the celerity of their motion, the author says it is almost incredible: he gives several instances of lies that have gone faster than a man can ride post: your terrifying lies travel at a prodigious rate, above ten miles an hour: your whispers move in a narrow vortex, but very swiftly. The author says, it is impossible to explain several phænomena in relation to the celerity of lies, without the supposition of synchronism and combination. As to the duration of lies, he says there are of all sorts, from hours and days to ages; that there are some which, like insects, die and revive again in a different form; that good artists, like people who build upon a short lease, will calculate the duration of a lie surely to answer their purpose; to last just as long, and no longer, than the turn is served.

The tenth chapter treats of the characteristics of lies; how to know when, where, and by whom invented. Your Dutch, English, and French ware are amply distinguished from one another; an Exchange lie from one coined at the other end of the town: great judgment is to be shown as to the place where the species is intended to circulate: very low and base coin will serve for Wapping: there are several coffee-houses that have their particular stamps, which a judicious practitioner may easily know. All your great men have their proper phantateustics. The author says he has attained, by study and application, to so great skill in this matter that, bring him any lie, he can tell whose image it bears so truly, as the great man himself

shall not have the face to deny it. The promissory lies of great men are known by shouldering, hugging, squeezing, smiling, bowing; and their lies in matter of fact, by immoderate swearing.

He spends the whole eleventh chapter on one simple question, whether a lie is best contradicted by truth, or by another lie? The author says that, considering the large extent of the cylindrical surface of the soul, and the great propensity to believe lies in the generality of mankind of late years, he thinks the properest contradiction to a lie is another lie. For example, if it should be reported that the pretender was in London, one would not contradict it by saying, he never was in England; but you must prove by eye-witnesses that he has come no further than Greenwich, and then went back again. Thus if it be spread about that a great person were dying of some disease, you must not say the truth, that they are in health, and never had such a disease, but that they are slowly recovering of it. So there was not long ago a gentleman, who affirmed, that the treaty with France, for bringing popery and slavery into England, was signed the 15th of September; to which another answered very judiciously, not, by opposing truth to his lie, that there was no such treaty; but that, to his certain knowledge, there were many things in that treaty not yet adjusted.

[The account of the second volume of this excellent treatise is reserved for another time.]

## THE EXAMINER, No. 15.

*November* 9, 1710.*

"E quibus hi vacuas implent sermonibus aures,
Hi narrata ferunt alio: mensuraque ficti
Crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adjicit auctor.
Illic Credulitas, illic temerarius Error,
Vanaque Lætitia est, consternatique Timores,
Seditioque recens, dubioque auctore Susurri."

"With idle tales this fills our empty ears;
The next reports what from the first he hears.
The rolling fictions grow in strength and size,
Each author adding to the former lies.
Here vain credulity, with new desires,
Leads us astray, and groundless joy inspires;
The dubious whispers, tumults fresh design'd,
And chilling fears astound the anxious mind."

I AM prevailed on, through the importunity of friends, to interrupt the scheme I had begun in my last paper, by an "Essay upon the Art of Political Lying." We are told the devil is the father of lies, and was a liar from the beginning; so that, beyond contradiction, the invention is old: and, which is more, his first Essay of it was purely political, employed in undermining the authority of his prince, and seducing a third part of the subjects from their obedience: for which he was driven down from heaven, where (as Milton expresses it) he had been viceroy of a great western province; and forced to exercise his talent in inferior regions among other fallen spirits, poor or deluded men,

* On the same subject as the previous paper.

whom he still daily tempts to his own sin, and will ever do so, till he be chained in the bottomless pit.

But although the devil be the father of lies, he seems, like the great inventors, to have lost much of his reputation by the continual improvements that have been made upon him.

Who first reduced lying into an art, and adapted it to politics, is not so clear from history, although I have made some diligent inquiries. I shall, therefore, consider it only according to the modern system, as it has been cultivated these twenty years past in the southern part of our own island.

The poets tell us that, after the giants were overthrown by the gods, the Earth in revenge produced her last offspring, which was Fame. And the fable is thus interpreted: that when tumults and seditions are quieted, rumours and false reports are plentifully spread through a nation. So that, by this account, lying is the last relief of a routed, earth-born, rebellious party in a state. But here the moderns have made great additions, applying their art to the gaining of power and preserving it, as well as revenging themselves after they have lost it; as the same instruments are made use of by animals to feed themselves when they are hungry, and to bite those that tread upon them.

But the same genealogy cannot always be admitted for political lying; I shall therefore desire to refine upon it, by adding some circumstances of its birth and parents. A political lie is sometimes born out of a discarded statesman's head, and thence delivered to be nursed and dandled by the rabble. Sometimes it is pronounced a monster, and licked into shape: at other times it comes into the world completely formed, and is spoiled in the licking. It

is often born an infant in the regular way, and requires time to mature it; and often it sees the light in its full growth, but dwindles away by degrees. Sometimes it is of noble birth, and sometimes the spawn of a stock-jobber. Here it screams aloud at the opening of the womb, and there it is delivered with a whisper. I know a lie that now disturbs half the kingdom with its noise, which, although too proud and great at present to own its parents, I can remember its whisperhood. To conclude the nativity of this monster; when it comes into the world without a sting it is still-born; and whenever it loses its sting it dies.

No wonder if an infant so miraculous in its birth should be destined for great adventures; and accordingly we see it has been the guardian spirit of a prevailing party for almost twenty years. It can conquer kingdoms without fighting, and sometimes with the loss of a battle. It gives and resumes employments; can sink a mountain to a mole-hill, and raise a mole-hill to a mountain: has presided for many years at committees of elections; can wash a black-moor white; make a saint of an atheist, and a patriot of a profligate; can furnish foreign ministers with intelligence, and raise or let fall the credit of the nation. This goddess flies with a huge looking-glass in her hands, to dazzle the crowd, and make them see, according as she turns it, their ruin in their interest, and their interest in their ruin. In this glass you will behold your best friends, clad in coats powdered with *fleurs de lis* and triple crowns; their girdles hung round with chains, aud beads, and wooden shoes; and your worst enemies adorned with the ensigns of liberty, property, indulgence, moderation, and a cornucopia in their hands. Her large wings, like those of a flying-fish, are of no use but while they were moist; she therefore dips them in mud,

and, soaring aloft, scatters it in the eyes of the multitude, flying with great swiftness; but at every turn is forced to stoop in dirty ways for new supplies.

I have been sometimes thinking, if a man had the art of the second sight for seeing lies, as they have in Scotland for seeing spirits, how admirably he might entertain himself in this town, by observing the different shapes, sizes, and colours of those swarms of lies which buzz about the heads of some people, like flies about a horse's ears in summer; or those legions hovering every afternoon in Exchange-alley, enough to darken the air; or over a club of discontented grandees, and thence sent down in cargoes to be scattered at elections.

There is one essential point wherein a political liar differs from others of the faculty, that he ought to have but a short memory, which is necessary, according to the various occasions he meets with every hour of differing from himself, and swearing to both sides of a contradiction, as he finds the persons disposed with whom he has to deal. In describing the virtues and vices of mankind, it is convenient, upon every article, to have some eminent person in our eye, from whom we copy our description. I have strictly observed this rule, and my imagination this minute represents before me a certain great man (earl of Wharton) famous for his talent, to the constant practice of which he owes his twenty years' reputation of the most skilful head in England for the management of nice affairs. The superiority of his genius consists in nothing else but an inexhaustible fund of political lies, which he plentifully distributes every minute he speaks, and by an unparalleled generosity forgets, and consequently contradicts, the next half hour. He never yet considered whether any proposition were true or false, but whether it were convenient for

the present minute or company to affirm or deny it; so that, if you think fit to refine upon him, by interpreting everything he says, as we do dreams, by the contrary, you are still to seek, and will find yourself equally deceived whether you believe or not: the only remedy is to suppose that you have heard some inarticulate sounds, without any meaning at all; and besides, that will take off the horror you might be apt to conceive at the oaths wherewith he perpetually tags both ends of every proposition: although, at the same time, I think he cannot with any justice be taxed with perjury when he invokes God and Christ, because he has often fairly given public notice to the world that he believes in neither.

Some people may think that such an accomplishment as this can be of no great use to the owner, or his party, after it has been often practised and is become notorious; but they are widely mistaken. Few lies carry the inventor's mark, and the most prostitute enemy to truth may spread a thousand without being known for the author: besides, as the vilest writer has his readers, so the greatest liar has his believers: and it often happens that, if a lie be believed only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no further occasion for it. Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it, so that when men come to be undeceived it is too late; the jest is over, and the tale has had its effect: like a man who has thought of a good repartee when the discourse is changed or the company parted; or like a physician who has found out an infallible medicine after the patient is dead.

Considering that natural disposition in many men to lie, and in multitudes to believe, I have been perplexed what to do with that maxim so frequent in everybody's mouth, that truth will at last prevail. Here has this island of ours, for

the greatest part of twenty years, lain under the influence of such counsels and persons, whose principle and interest it was to corrupt our manners, blind our understanding, drain our wealth, and in time destroy our constitution both in church and state, and we at last were brought to the very brink of ruin; yet by the means of perpetual misrepresentations, have never been able to distinguish between our enemies and friends. We have seen a great part of the nation's money got into the hands of those who, by their birth, education, and merit, could pretend no higher than to wear our liveries; while others, who, by their credit, quality, and fortune, were only able to give reputation and success to the Revolution, were not only laid aside as dangerous and useless, but loaded with the scandal of Jacobites, men of arbitrary principles, and pensioners to France; while truth, who is said to lie in a well, seemed now to be buried there under a heap of stones. But I remember it was a usual complaint among the Whigs, that the bulk of the landed men was not in their interests, which some of the wisest looked on as an ill omen; and we saw it with the utmost difficulty that they could preserve a majority, while the court and ministry were on their side, till they had learned those admirable expedients for deciding elections and influencing distant boroughs by powerful motives from the city. But all this was mere force and constraint, however upheld by most dexterous artifice and management, until the people began to apprehend their properties, their religion, and the monarchy itself in danger; when we saw them greedily laying hold on the first occasion to interpose. But of this mighty change in the dispositions of the people I shall discourse more at large in some following paper: wherein I shall endeavour to undeceive or discover those deluded or deluding persons who hope or pretend it is

only a short madness in the vulgar, from which they may soon recover; whereas, I believe it will appear to be very different in its causes, its symptoms, and its consequences; and prove a great example to illustrate the maxim I lately mentioned, that truth (however sometimes late) will at last prevail.

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## A MODEST PROPOSAL

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLIC. 1729.

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants: who as they grow up either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and, therefore, whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve

so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropped from its dam may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment; at most not above the value of 2s., which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner as instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us! sacrificing the poor innocent babes I doubt more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about 200,000 couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract 30,000 couple who are able

to maintain their own children (although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present distresses of the kingdom); but this being granted, there will remain 170,000 breeders. I again subtract 50,000 for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remains 120,000 children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, how this number shall be reared and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land; they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing, till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time, they can however be properly looked upon only as probationers; as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no saleable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above 3*l.* or 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* at most on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well

nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the 120,000 children already computed, 20,000 may be reserved for breed, whereof only one-fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining 100,000 may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, will increase to 28 pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentifully in March, and a little before and after: for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolific diet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine

months after Lent than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom: and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about 2*s.* per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give 10*s.* for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he has only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among the tenants; the mother will have 8*s.* net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive than dressing them hot from the knife as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased in discoursing on this matter to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of

age nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every country being now ready to starve for want of work and service; and these to be disposed of by their parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me, from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our school-boys by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think, with humble submission be a loss to the public, because they soon would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice (although indeed very unjustly), as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, has always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London above twenty years ago: and in conversation told my friend, that in his country when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that in his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his imperial majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet, at 400 crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without one single groat to their fortunes cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at playhouse and assemblies in

foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying and rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young labourers, they are now in as hopeful a condition; they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an episcopal curate.

Secondly, The poor tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, Whereas the maintenance of 100,000 children, from two years old and upward, cannot be computed at less than 10*s.* a-piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased £50,000 per annum, beside the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, The constant breeders, beside the gain of 8*s.* sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, This food would likewise bring great custom to taverns; where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating: and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, This would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit or expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, their sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For

instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barreled beef, the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our table; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast or any other public entertainment. But this and many others I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that 1000 families in this city would be constant customers for infants' flesh, beside others who might have it at merry-meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about 20,000 carcasses; and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining 80,000.

I can think of no one objection that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at 5*s*. a pound: of using neither clothes nor household furniture except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want of which we differ even from LAPLANDERS and the inhabitants of

TOPINAMBOO : of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken : of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing : of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their tenants : lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers ; who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our negative goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he has at least some glimpse of hope that there will be ever some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But as to myself, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success I fortunately fell upon this proposal ; which, as it is wholly new, so it has something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging ENGLAND. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider

two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for 100,000 useless mouths and backs. And secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt 2,000,000*l.* sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession to the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and labourers, with the wives and children who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold as to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like or greater miseries upon their breed for ever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past child-bearing.

# ON DOING GOOD;

A SERMON ON THE OCCASION OF WOOD'S PROJECT.*

GALATIANS, vi. 10.

*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.*

NATURE directs every one of us, and God permits us, to consult our own private good, before the private good of any other person whatsoever. We are indeed commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves, but not as well as ourselves. The love we have for ourselves is to be the pattern of that love we ought to have toward our neighbour; but as the copy doth not equal the original, so my neighbour cannot think it hard if I prefer myself, who am the original, before him, who is only the copy. Thus, if any matter equally concern the life, the reputation, the profit of my neighbour and my own; the law of nature, which is the law of God, obligeth me to take care of myself first, and afterward of him. And this I need not be at much pains in persuading you to; for the want of self-love, with regard to things of this world, is not among the faults of mankind. But then, on the other side, if, by a small loss or hurt to myself, I can procure a great good to my neighbour, in that case his interest is to be preferred. For

* "I never," said the Dean, in a jocular conversation, "preached but twice in my life, and they were not sermons, but pamphlets." Being asked on what subject, he replied, "They were against Wood's halfpence."—*Pilkington.*

example, if I can be sure of saving his life without great danger to my own; if I can preserve him from being undone without ruining myself; or recover his reputation without blasting mine; all this I am obliged to do: and if I sincerely perform it, I do then obey the command of God, in loving my neighbour as myself.

But, besides this love we owe to every man in his particular capacity, under the title of our neighbour, there is yet a duty of a more large, extensive nature incumbent on us; which is, our love to our neighbour in his public capacity, as he is a member of that great body the commonwealth, under the same government with ourselves; and this is usually called love of the public, and is a duty to which we are more strictly obliged than even that of loving ourselves; because therein ourselves are also contained, as well as all our neighbours, in one great body. This love of the public, or of the commonwealth, or love of our country, was in ancient times properly known by the name of virtue, because it was the greatest of all virtues, and was supposed to contain all virtues in it; and many great examples of this virtue are left us on record, scarcely to be believed, or even conceived, in such a base, corrupted, wicked age as this we live in. In those times it was common for men to sacrifice their lives for the good of their country, although they had neither hope nor belief of future rewards; whereas, in our days, very few make the least scruple of sacrificing a whole nation, as well as their own souls, for a little present gain; which often hath been known to end in their own ruin in this world, as it certainly must in that to come.

Have we not seen men for the sake of some petty employment give up the very natural rights and liberties of their country and of mankind, in the ruin of which themselves

must at last be involved? Are not these corruptions gotten among the meanest of our people, who for a piece of money will give their votes at a venture for the disposal of their own lives and fortunes, without considering whether it be to those who are most likely to betray or defend them? But if I were to produce only one instance out of a hundred wherein we fail in this duty of loving our country, it would be an endless labour, and therefore I shall not attempt it.

But here I would not be misunderstood: by the love of our country I do not mean loyalty to our king, for that is a duty of another nature; and a man may be very loyal in the common sense of the word without one grain of public good at his heart. Witness this very kingdom we live in. I verily believe that since the beginning of the world no nation upon earth ever showed (all circumstances considered) such high constant marks of loyalty in all their actions and behaviour as we have done, and at the same time no people ever appeared more utterly void of what is called a public spirit. When I say the people, I mean the bulk or mass of the people, for I have nothing to do with those in power.

Therefore I shall think my time not ill spent if I can persuade most or all of you who hear me to show the love you have for your country by endeavouring in your several situations to do all the public good you are able. For I am certainly persuaded that all our misfortunes arise from no other original cause than that general disregard among us to the public welfare.

I therefore undertake to show you three things:—

*First*, That there are few people so weak or mean who have it not sometimes in their power to be useful to the public.

*Secondly*, That it is often in the power of the meanest among mankind to do mischief to the public.

And, *lastly*, That all wilful injuries done to the public are very great and aggravated sins in the sight of God.

*First*, There are few people so weak or mean who have it not sometimes in their power to be useful to the public.

Solomon tells us of a poor wise man who saved a city by his counsel. It hath often happened that a private soldier, by some unexpected brave attempt, hath been instrumental in obtaining a great victory. How many obscure men have been authors of very useful inventions whereof the world now reaps the benefit! The very example of honesty and industry in a poor tradesman will sometimes spread through a neighbourhood when others see how successful he is; and thus so many useful members are gained, for which the whole body of the public is the better. Whoever is blessed with a true public spirit, God will certainly put it into his way to make use of that blessing for the ends it was given him by some means or other; and therefore it hath been observed in most ages that the greatest actions for the benefit of the commonwealth have been performed by the wisdom or courage, the contrivance or industry, of particular men and not of numbers; and that the safety of a kingdom hath often been owing to those hands whence it was least expected.

But, *secondly*, It is often in the power of the meanest among mankind to do mischief to the public; and hence arise most of those miseries with which the states and kingdoms of the earth are infested. How many great princes have been murdered by the meanest ruffians! The weakest hand can open a flood-gate to drown a country, which a thousand of the strongest cannot stop. Those who have thrown off all regard for public good will often have it

in their way to do public evil, and will not fail to exercise that power whenever they can. The greatest blow given of late to this kingdom was by the dishonesty of a few manufacturers, who, by imposing bad ware at foreign markets, in almost the only traffic permitted to us, did half ruin that trade, by which this poor unhappy kingdom now suffers in the midst of sufferings. I speak not here of persons in high stations, who ought to be free from all reflection, and are supposed always to intend the welfare of the community; but we now find by experience that the meanest instrument may, by the concurrence of accidents, have it in his power to bring a whole kingdom to the very brink of destruction, and is at this present endeavouring to finish his work; and hath agents among ourselves who are contented to see their own country undone, to be small sharers in that iniquitous gain which at last must end in their own ruin as well as ours. I confess it was chiefly the consideration of that great danger we are in, which engaged me to discourse to you on this subject, to exhort you to a love of your country, and a public spirit when all you have is at stake; to prefer the interests of your prince and your fellow-subjects before that of one destructive impostor and a few of his adherents.

Perhaps it may be thought by some that this way of discoursing is not so proper from the pulpit. But surely when an open attempt is made and far carried on, to make a great kingdom one large poor-house, to deprive us of all means to exercise hospitality or charity, to turn our cities and churches into ruins, to make the country a desert for wild beasts and robbers, to destroy all arts and sciences, all trades and manufactures, and the very tillage of the ground, only to enrich one obscure, ill-designing projector and his followers, it is time for the pastor to cry out "that

the wolf is getting into his flock," to warn them to stand together, and all to consult the common safety. And God be praised for his infinite goodness in raising such a spirit of union among us, at least in this point, in the midst of all our former divisions; which union, if it continue, will in all probability defeat the pernicious design of this pestilent enemy to the nation!

But hence it clearly follows how necessary the love of our country or a public spirit is in every particular man, since the wicked have so many opportunities of doing public mischief. Every man is upon his guard for his private advantage; but where the public is concerned, he is apt to be negligent, considering himself only as one among two or three millions, among whom the loss is equally shared, and thus he thinks he can be no great sufferer. Meanwhile the trader, the farmer, and the shopkeeper, complain of the hardness and deadness of the times, and wonder whence it comes; while it is in a great measure owing to their own folly, for want of that love of their country, and public spirit and firm union among themselves, which are so necessary to the prosperity of every nation.

Another method by which the meanest wicked man may have it in his power to injure the public is false accusation, whereof this kingdom hath afforded too many examples; neither is it long since no man whose opinions were thought to differ from those in fashion could safely converse beyond his nearest friends for fear of being sworn against as a traitor by those who made a traffic of perjury and subornation; by which the very peace of the nation was disturbed, and men fled from each other as they would from a lion or a bear got loose. And it is very remarkable that the pernicious project now in hand to reduce us to beggary was forwarded by one of these false accusers, who had been

convicted of endeavouring, by perjury and subornation, to take away the lives of several innocent persons here among us, and indeed there could not be a more proper instrument for such a work.

Another method by which the meanest people may do injury to the public is the spreading of lies and false rumours: thus raising a distrust among the people of a nation, causing them to mistake their true interest, and their enemies for their friends; and this hath been likewise too successful a practice among us, where we have known the whole kingdom misled by the grossest lies, raised upon occasion to serve some particular turn. As it hath also happened in the case I lately mentioned, where one obscure man, by representing our wants where they were least, and concealing them where they were greatest, had almost succeeded in a project of utterly ruining this whole kingdom, and may still succeed, if God doth not continue that public spirit which he hath almost miraculously kindled in us upon this occasion.

Thus we see the public is many times as it were at the mercy of the meanest instrument, who can be wicked enough to watch opportunities of doing it mischief, upon the principles of avarice or malice, which I am afraid are deeply rooted in too many breasts, and against which there can be no defence, but a firm resolution in all honest men to be closely united and active in showing their love to their country, by preferring the public interest to their present private advantage. If a passenger in a great storm at sea should hide his goods that they might not be thrown overboard to lighten the ship, what would be the consequence? The ship is cast away, and he loses his life and goods together.

We have heard of men who, through greediness of gain,

have brought infected goods into a nation; which bred a plague, whereof the owners and their families perished first. Let those among us consider this and tremble, whose houses are privately stored with those materials of beggary and desolation, lately brought over to be scattered like a pestilence among their countrymen, which may probably first seize upon themselves and their families, until their houses shall be made a dunghill.

I shall mention one practice more, by which the meanest instruments often succeed in doing public mischief; and this is by deceiving us with plausible arguments, to make us believe that the most ruinous project they can offer is intended for our good, as it happened in the case so often mentioned. For the poor ignorant people, allured by the appearing convenience in their small dealings, did not discover the serpent in the brass, but were ready, like the Israelites, to offer incense to it; neither could the wisdom of the nation convince them, until some of good intentions made the cheat so plain to their sight, that those who run may read. And thus the design was to treat us, in every point, as the Philistines treated Samson (I mean when he was betrayed by Delilah), first to put out our eyes, and then to bind us with fetters of brass.

I proceed to the last thing I proposed, which was to show you that all wilful injuries done to the public are very great and aggravating sins in the sight of God.

*First*, It is apparent from Scripture, and most agreeable to reason, that the safety and welfare of nations are under the most peculiar care of God's providence. Thus he promised Abraham to save Sodom, if only ten righteous men could be found in it. Thus the reason which God gave to Jonas for not destroying Nineveh was, because there was six score thousand men in that city.

All government is from God, who is the God of order; and therefore whoever attempts to breed confusion or disturbance among a people doth his utmost to take the government of the world out of God's hands, and put it into the hands of the devil, who is the author of confusion. By which it is plain that no crime, how heinous soever, committed against particular persons, can equal the guilt of him who does injury to the public.

*Secondly*, All offenders against their country lie under this grievous difficulty, that it is impossible to obtain a pardon or make restitution. The bulk of mankind are very quick at resenting injuries, and very slow in forgiving them: and how shall one man be able to obtain the pardon of millions, or repair the injury he hath done to millions? How shall those who, by a most destructive fraud, got the whole wealth of our neighbouring kingdom into their hands, be ever able to make a recompense? How will the authors and promoters of that villainous project for the ruin of this poor country be able to account with us for the injuries they have already done, although they should no further succeed? The deplorable case of such wretches must entirely be left to the unfathomable mercies of God: for those who know the least in religion are not ignorant that, without our utmost endeavours to make restitution to the person injured, and to obtain his pardon, added to sincere repentance, there is no hope of salvation given in the gospel.

*Lastly*, All offences against our own country have this aggravation, that they are ungrateful and unnatural. It is to our country we owe those laws which protect us in our lives, our liberties, our properties, and our religion. Our country produced us into the world, and continues to nourish us, so that it is usually called our mother; and

there have been examples of great magistrates who have put their own children to death for endeavouring to betray their country, as if they had attempted the life of their natural parent.

Thus I have briefly shown you how terrible a sin it is to be an enemy to our country, in order to incite you to the contrary virtue, which at this juncture is so highly necessary, when every man's endeavour will be of use. We have hitherto been just able to support ourselves under many hardships; but now the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and nothing but a firm union among us can prevent our utter undoing. This we are obliged to in duty to our gracious king, as well as to ourselves. Let us, therefore, preserve that public spirit, which God hath raised in us, for our own temporal interest. For if this wicked project should succeed, which it cannot do but by our own folly; if we sell ourselves for nought, the merchant, the shopkeeper, the artificer, must fly to the desert with their miserable families, there to starve or live upon rapine, or at least exchange their country for one more hospitable than that where they were born.

Thus much I thought it my duty to say to you who are under my care, to warn you against those temporal evils which may draw the worst of spiritual evils after them; such as heart-burnings, murmurings, discontents, and all manner of wickedness which a desperate condition of life may tempt men to.

I am sensible that what I have now said will not go very far, being confined to this assembly; but I hope it may stir up others of my brethren to exhort their several congregations, after a more effectual manner, to show their love for their country on this important occasion. And this I am sure cannot be called meddling in affairs of state.

I pray God protect his most gracious majesty and this kingdom long under his government; and defend us from all ruinous projectors, deceivers, suborners, perjurers, false accusers, and oppressors; from the virulence of party and faction; and unite us in loyalty to our king, love to our country, and charity to each other.

And this we beg, for Jesus Christ's sake: to whom be all honour, glory, power, might, majesty, and dominion, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

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## A PROPOSAL

FOR GIVING BADGES TO THE BEGGARS IN ALL THE PARISHES OF DUBLIN.

*April* 22, 1737.

It has been a general complaint that the poor-house (especially since the new constitution by act of parliament) has been of no benefit to this city, for the ease of which it was wholly intended. I had the honour to be a member of it many years before it was new-modelled by the legislature, not from any personal regard, but merely as one of the two deans, who are of course put into most commissions that relate to the city; and I have likewise the honour to have been left out of several commissions, upon the score of party, in which my predecessors time out of mind have always been members.

The first commission was made up of about fifty persons, which were the lord mayor, aldermen and sheriffs, and some few other citizens, the judges, the two archbishops, the two deans of the city, and one or two more gentlemen. And I must confess my opinion, that the dissolving of the old

commission and establishing a new one of nearly three times the number have been the great cause of rendering so good a design not only useless but a grievance, instead of a benefit to the city. In the present commission all the city clergy are included, besides a great number of squires; not only those who reside in Dublin and the neighbourhood, but several who live at a great distance, and cannot possibly have the least concern for the advantage of the city.

At the few general meetings that I have attended since the new establishment, I observed very little was done except one or two acts of extreme justice, which I then thought might as well have been spared; and I have found the court of assistants usually taken up in little wrangles about coachmen, and adjusting accounts of meal and small beer, which, however necessary, might sometimes have given place to matters of much greater moment,—I mean some schemes recommended to the general board for answering the chief ends in erecting and establishing such a poor-house and endowing it with so considerable a revenue; and the principal end I take to have been that of maintaining the poor and orphans of the city where the parishes are not able to do it, and clearing the streets from all strollers, foreigners, and sturdy beggars, with which, to the universal complaint and admiration, Dublin is more infested since the establishment of the poor-house than it was ever known to be since its first erection.

As the whole fund for supporting this hospital is raised only from the inhabitants of the city, so there can be hardly anything more absurd than to see it misemployed in maintaining foreign beggars, and bastards or orphans of farmers, whose country landlords never contributed one shilling toward their support. I would engage that half this revenue, if employed with common care and no very great

degree of common honesty, would maintain all the real objects of charity in this city, except a small number of original poor in every parish, who might, without being burdensome to the parishioners, find a tolerable support.

I have for some years past applied myself to several lord-mayors, and the late archbishop of Dublin, for a remedy to this evil of foreign beggars; and they all appeared ready to receive a very plain proposal, I mean that of badging the original poor of every parish who begged in the streets; that the said beggars should be confined to their own parishes; that they should wear their badges well sewn upon one of their shoulders, always visible, on pain of being whipped and turned out of town, or whatever legal punishment may be thought proper and effectual. But, by the wrong way of thinking in some clergymen, and the indifference of others, this method was perpetually defeated, to their own continual disquiet, which they do not ill deserve; and if the grievance affected only them, it would be of less consequence, because the remedy is in their own power; but all street-walkers and shopkeepers bear an equal share in its hourly vexation.

I never heard of more than one objection against this expedient of badging the poor, and confining their walks to their several parishes. The objection was this—What shall we do with the foreign beggars? must they be left to starve? I answered, No; but they must be driven and whipped out of the town; and let the next country parish do as they please, or rather, after the practice in England, send them from one parish to another until they reach their own homes. By the old laws of England, still in force, every parish is bound to maintain its own poor; and the matter is of no such consequence in this point as some would make it, whether a country parish be rich or poor.

In the remoter and poorer parishes of the kingdom, all necessaries of life proper for poor people are comparatively cheaper; I mean butter-milk, oatmeal, potatoes, and other vegetables; and every farmer or cottager, who is not himself a beggar, can spare sometimes a sup or a morsel, not worth the fourth part of a farthing, to an indigent neighbour of his own parish, who is disabled from work. A beggar, native of the parish, is known to the squire, to the church-minister, to the popish priest, or the conventicle-teacher, as well as to every farmer; he has generally some relations able to live, and contribute something to his maintenance; none of which advantages can be reasonably expected on a removal to places where he is altogether unknown. If he be not quite maimed, he and his trull and litter of brats (if he has any) may get half their support by doing some kind of work in their power, and thereby be less burdensome to the people. In short, all necessaries of life grow in the country, and not in cities, and are cheaper where they grow; nor is it equitable that beggars should put us to the charge of giving them victuals, and the carriage too.

But when the spirit of wandering takes him, attended by his females and their equipage of children, he becomes a nuisance to the whole country; he and his females are thieves, and teach the trade of stealing to their brood of four years old; and if his infirmities be counterfeit, it is dangerous for a single person unarmed to meet him on the road. He wanders from one county to another, but still with a view to this town, where he arrives at last, and enjoys all the privileges of a Dublin beggar.

I do not wonder that the country squires should be very willing to send up their colonies; but why the city should be content to receive them is beyond my imagination.

If the city were obliged by their charters to maintain a thousand beggars, they could do it cheaper by eighty per cent. a hundred miles off, than in this town, or in any of its suburbs.

There is no village in Connaught that in proportion shares so deeply in the daily increasing miseries of Ireland as its capital city; to which miseries there hardly remained any addition, except the perpetual swarms of foreign beggars, who might be banished in a month, without expense, and with very little trouble.

As I am personally acquainted with a great number of street-beggars, I find some weak attempts have been made in one or two parishes to promote the wearing of badges; and my first question to those who ask an alms is, "Where is your badge?" I have, in several years, met with about a dozen who were ready to produce them, some out of their pockets, others from under their coats, and two or three on their shoulders, only covered with a sort of capes, which they could lift up or let down upon occasion. They are too lazy to work; they are not afraid to steal, nor ashamed to beg; and yet are too proud to be seen with a badge, as many of them have confessed to me, and not a few in very injurious terms, particularly the females. They all look upon such an obligation as a high indignity done to their office. I appeal to all indifferent people whether such wretches deserve to be relieved. As to myself, I must confess this absurd insolence has so affected me, that for several years past I have not disposed of one single farthing to a street-beggar, nor intend to do so, until I see a better regulation; and I have endeavoured to persuade all my brother walkers to follow my example, which most of them assure me they will do. For if beggary be not able to beat out pride, it cannot deserve charity. However, as to

persons in coaches and chairs, they bear but little of the persecution we suffer, and are willing to leave it entirely upon us.

To say the truth, there is not a more undeserving, vicious race of human kind than the bulk of those who are reduced to beggary, even in this beggarly country. For as a great part of our public miseries is originally owing to our own faults (but what those faults are, I am grown by experience too wary to mention), so I am confident that, among the meaner people, nineteen in twenty of those who are reduced to a starving condition did not become so by what the lawyers call the work of God either upon their bodies or goods; but merely from their own idleness, attended with all manner of vices, particularly drunkenness, thievery, and cheating.

Whoever inquires, as I have frequently done from those who have asked me an alms, what was their former course of life, will find them to have been servants in good families, broken tradesmen, labourers, cottagers, and what they call decayed housekeepers; but (to use their own cant) reduced by losses and crosses, by which nothing can be understood but idleness and vice.

As this is the only Christian country where people, contrary to the old maxim, are the poverty, and not the riches of the nation; so the blessing of increase and multiply is by us converted into a curse; and as marriage has been ever countenanced in all free countries, so we should be less miserable if it were discouraged in ours, as far as can be consistent with Christianity. It is seldom known in England that the labourer, the lower mechanic, the servant, or the cottager, thinks of marrying until he has saved up a stock of money sufficient to carry on his business, nor takes a wife without a suitable portion; and as seldom fails of making a yearly addition to that stock, with a view of

providing for his children. But in this kingdom the case is directly contrary ; where many thousand couples are yearly married, whose whole united fortunes, bating the rags on their backs, would not be sufficient to purchase a pint of butter-milk for their wedding-supper, nor have any prospect of supporting their honourable state, but by service, or labour, or thievery. Nay, their happiness is often deferred until they find credit to borrow, or cunning to steal, a shilling to pay their popish priest, or infamous couple beggar. Surely no miraculous portion of wisdom would be required to find some kind of remedy against this destructive evil, or at least not to draw the consequences of it upon our decaying city, the greatest part whereof must of course in a few years become desolate or in ruins.

In all other nations, that are not absolutely barbarous, parents think themselves bound by the law of nature and reason to make some provision for their children ; but the reason offered by the inhabitants of Ireland for marrying is, that they may have children to maintain them when they grow old and unable to work.

I am informed that we have been for some time past extremely obliged to England for one very beneficial branch of commerce ; for it seems they are grown so gracious as to transmit us continually colonies of beggars, in return for a million of money they receive yearly from hence. That I may give no offence, I profess to mean real English beggars, in the literal meaning of the word, as it is usually understood by Protestants. It seems the justices of the peace and parish-officers in the western coasts of England have a good while followed the trade of exporting hither their supernumerary beggars, in order to advance the English Protestant interest among us ; and these they are so kind as to send over *gratis*, and duty free. I have had the honour

more than once, to attend large cargoes of them from Chester to Dublin; and I was then so ignorant as to give my opinion that our city should receive them into Bridewell, and after a month's residence, having been well whipped twice a-day, fed with bran and water, and put to hard labour, they should be returned honestly back with thanks, as cheap as they came: or if that were not approved of, I proposed that, whereas one Englishman is allowed to be of equal intrinsic value with twelve born in Ireland, we should in justice return them a dozen for one, to dispose of as they please.

As to the native poor of this city, there would be little or no damage in confining them to their several parishes. For instance: a beggar of the parish of St. Warburgh's, or any other parish here, if he be an object of compassion, has an equal chance to receive his proportion of alms from every charitable hand: because the inhabitants, one or other, walk through every street in town, and give their alms without considering the place, wherever they think it may be well disposed of; and these helps, added to what they get in eatables, by going from house to house among the gentry and citizens, will, without being very burdensome, be sufficient to keep them alive.

It is true the poor of the suburb parishes will not have altogether the same advantage, because they are not equally in the road of business and passengers; but here it is to be considered, that the beggars there have not so good a title to public charity, because most of them are strollers from the country, and compose a principal part of that great nuisance which we ought to remove. I should be apt to think, that few things can be more irksome to a city minister than a number of beggars which do not belong to his district; whom he has no obligation to take care of,

who are no part of his flock, and who take the bread out of the mouths of those to whom it properly belongs. When I mention this abuse to any minister of a city parish, he usually lays the fault upon the beadles, who, he says, are bribed by the foreign beggars; and, as those beadles often keep ale-houses, they find their account in such customers. This evil might easily be remedied, if the parishes would make some small addition to the salaries of beadles, and be more careful in the choice of those officers. But I conceive there is one effectual method in the power of every minister to put in practice; I mean, by making it the interest of all his own original poor to drive out intruders; for, if the parish beggars were absolutely forbidden by the minister and church-officers to suffer strollers to come into the parish, upon pain of themselves not being permitted to beg alms at the church doors, or at the houses and shops of the inhabitants, they would prevent interlopers more effectually than twenty beadles.

And here I cannot but take notice of the great indiscretion of our city shopkeepers, who suffer their doors to be daily besieged by crowds of beggars (as the gates of a lord are by duns), to the great disgust and vexation of many customers, who I have frequently observed to go to other shops, rather than suffer such a persecution; which might easily be avoided, if no foreign beggars were allowed to infest them.

Wherefore I do assert, that the shopkeepers, who are the greatest complainers of this grievance, lamenting that for every customer they are worried by fifty beggars, do very well deserve what they suffer, when an apprentice with a horsewhip is able to lash every beggar from the shop who is not one of the parish, and does not wear the badge of that parish on his shoulder, well fastened and fairly visible;

and if this practice were universal in every house to all the sturdy vagrants, we should in a few weeks clear the town of all mendicants except those who have a proper title to our charity; as for the aged and infirm, it would be sufficient to give them nothing, and then they must starve, or follow their brethren.

It was the city that first endowed this hospital; and those who afterward contributed, as they were such who generally inhabited here, so they intended what they gave to be for the use of the city's poor. The revenues which have since been raised by parliament are wholly paid by the city, without the least charge upon any other part of the kingdom; and therefore nothing could more defeat the original design than to misapply those revenues on strolling beggars or bastards from the country, which bears no share in the charges we are at.

If some of the out parishes be overburdened with poor, the reason must be, that the greatest part of those poor are strollers from the country, who nestle themselves where they can find the cheapest lodgings, and from thence infest every part of the town; out of which they ought to be whipped as a most insufferable nuisance, being nothing else but a profligate clan of thieves, drunkards, heathens, and whoremongers, fitter to be rooted out of the face of the earth, than suffered to levy a vast annual tax upon the city, which shares too deep in the public miseries, brought on us by the oppressions we lie under from our neighbours, our brethren, our countrymen, our fellow-protestants, and fellow-subjects.

Some time ago I was appointed one of a committee to inquire into the state of the work-house; where we found that a charity was bestowed by a great person for a certain time, which in its consequence operated very much to the

detriment of the house; for, when the time was elapsed, all those who were supported by that charity continued on the same foot with the rest of the foundation; and being generally a pack of profligate vagabond wretches from several parts of the kingdom, corrupted all the rest; so partial, or treacherous, or interested, or ignorant, or mistaken, are generally all recommenders, not only to employments, but even to charity itself.

I know it is complained of, that the difficulty of driving foreign beggars out of the city is charged upon the *bellowers* (as they are called), who find their accounts best in suffering those vagrants to follow their trade through every part of the town. But this abuse might easily be remedied, and very much to the advantage of the whole city, if better salaries were given to those who execute that office in the several parishes, and would make it their interests to clear the town of those caterpillars, rather than hazard the loss of an employment that would give them an honest livelihood. But if that should fail, yet a general resolution of never giving charity to a street-beggar out of his own parish, or without a visible badge, would infallibly force all vagrants to depart.

There is generally a vagabond spirit in beggars which ought to be discouraged and severely punished. It is owing to the same causes that drove them into poverty; I mean idleness, drunkenness, and rash marriages, without the least prospect of supporting a family by honest endeavours, which never came into their thoughts. It is observed, that hardly one beggar in twenty looks upon himself to be relieved by receiving bread or other food; and they have in this town been frequently seen to pour out of their pitchers good broth that has been given them into the kennel; neither do they much regard clothes unless to sell them; for their rags

are part of their tools with which they work; they want only ale, brandy, and other strong liquors, which cannot be had without money; and money, as they conceive, always abounds in the metropolis.

I had some other thoughts to offer upon this subject. But as I am a desponder in my nature, and have tolerably well discovered the disposition of our people, who never will move a step toward easing themselves from any one single grievance, it will be thought that I have already said too much, and to little or no purpose, which has often been the fate or fortune of the writer.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

## THE TATLER, No. 5.*

"Laceratque, trahitque
Molle pecus." —VIRG.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1710-11.

AMONG other services I have met with from some critics, the cruelest for an old man is, that they will not let me be at quiet in my bed, but pursue me to my very dreams. I must not dream but when they please, nor upon long-continued subjects, however visionary in their own natures, because there is a manifest moral quite through them, which to produce as a dream is improbable and unnatural. The pain I might have had from this objection is prevented by considering they have missed another, against which I should have been at a loss to defend myself. They might have asked me whether the dreams I publish can properly be called lucubrations, which is the name I have given to all my papers, whether in volumes or half sheets; so manifest a contradiction *in terminis*, that I wonder no sophister ever thought of it. But the other is a cavil. I remember, when I was a boy at school, I have often dreamed out the whole passages of a day; that I rode a journey, baited, supped, went to bed, and rose next morning: and I have known young ladies who could dream a whole texture of adventures in one night large enough to make a novel. In youth the imagination is strong, not mixed with cares, nor tinged with those passions that most disturb and confound it; such as avarice, ambition, and many others. Now,

* Not Steele's *Tatler*, but a successor.

as old men are said to grow children again, so, in this article of dreaming, I am returned to my childhood. My imagination is at full ease, without care, avarice, or ambition, to clog it; by which, among many others, I have this advantage, of doubling the small remainder of my time, and living four-and-twenty hours in the day. However, the dream I am now going to relate is as wild as can well be imagined, and adapted to please these refiners upon sleep, without any moral that I can discover:—

"It happened that my maid left on the table in my bed-chamber one of her story books (as she calls them), which I took up, and found full of strange impertinence, fitted to her taste and condition; of poor servants who came to be ladies, and serving-men, of low degree, who married kings' daughters. Among other things, I met this sage observation, 'That a lion would never hurt a true virgin.' With this medley of nonsense in my fancy I went to bed, and dreamed that a friend waked me in the morning, and proposed, for pastime, to spend a few hours in seeing the parish lions, which he had not done since he came to town; and because they showed but once a-week, he would not miss the opportunity. I said I would humour him: although, to tell the truth, I was not fond of these cruel spectacles; and, if it were not so ancient a custom, founded (as I have heard) upon the wisest maxims, I should be apt to censure the inhumanity of those who introduced it."

All this will be a riddle to the waking reader, until I discover the scene my imagination had formed upon this maxim, "That a lion would never hurt a true virgin." "I dreamed, that by a law of immemorial time, a he lion was kept in every parish at the common charge, and in a place provided, adjoining to the churchyard; that before any one of the fair sex was married if she affirmed herself to be a

virgin, she must on her wedding-day, and in her wedding-clothes, perform the ceremony of going alone into the den, and stay an hour with the lion, let loose, and kept fasting four-and-twenty hours on purpose. At a proper height above the den were convenient galleries for the relations and friends of the young couple, and open to all spectators. No maiden was forced to offer herself to the lion; but, if she refused, it was a disgrace to marry her, and every one might have liberty of calling her a whore. And methought it was as usual a diversion to see the parish lions as with us to go to a play or an opera. And it was reckoned convenient to be near the church, either for marrying the virgin, if she escaped the trial, or for burying her bones, when the lion had devoured the rest, as he constantly did."

To go on therefore with the dream: "We called first (as I remember) to see St. Dunstan's lion: but were told they did not show to-day. From thence we went to that of Covent Garden, which, to my great surprise, we found as lean as a skeleton, when I expected quite the contrary; but the keeper said it was no wonder at all, because the poor beast had not got an ounce of woman's flesh since he came into the parish. This amazed me more than the other, and I was forming to myself a mighty veneration for the ladies in that quarter of the town, when the keeper went on, and said that he wondered that the parish would be at the charge of maintaining a lion for nothing. Friend (said I), do you call it nothing to justify the virtue of so many ladies; or has your lion lost his distinguishing faculty? Can there be anything more for the honour of your parish than that all the ladies married in your church were pure virgins?—That is true (said he), and the doctor knows it to his sorrow; for there has not been a couple married in our

church since his worship came among us. The virgins hereabouts are too wise to venture the claws of the lion; and, because nobody will marry them, have all entered into a vow of virginity; so that in proportion we have much the largest nunnery in the whole town. This manner of ladies entering into a vow of virginity, because they were not virgins, I easily conceived; and my dream told me, that the whole kingdom was full of nunneries, plentifully stocked from the same reason.

"We went to see another lion, where we found much company met in the gallery. The keeper told us we should see sport enough, as he called it; and in a little time we saw a young, beautiful lady put into the den, who walked up toward the lion with all imaginable security in her countenance, and looked smiling upon her lover and friends in the gallery; which I thought nothing extraordinary, because it was never known that any lion had been mistaken. But, however, we were all disappointed, for the lion lifted up his right paw, which was the fatal sign, and advancing forward, seized her by the arm, and began to tear it. The poor lady gave a terrible shriek, and cried out 'The lion is just, I am no virgin! Oh! Sappho! Sappho!' She could say no more, for the lion gave her the *coup de grace* by a squeeze in the throat, and she expired at his feet. The keeper dragged away her body, to feed the animal after the company should be gone: for the parish lion never used to eat in public. After a little pause, another lady came on toward the lion in the same manner as the former. We observed the beast smell her with diligence. He scratched both her hands with lifting them to his nose, and laying one of his claws on her bosom drew blood; however, he let her go, and at the same time turned from her with a sort of contempt, at which she was not

a little mortified, and retired with some confusion to her friends in the gallery. Methought the whole company immediately understood the meaning of this; that the easiness of the lady had suffered her to admit certain imprudent and dangerous familiarities, bordering too much upon what is criminal; neither was it sure whether the lover then present had not some sharers with him in those freedoms, of which a lady can never be too sparing.

"This happened to be an extraordinary day; for a third lady came into the den laughing loud, playing with her fan, tossing her head, and smiling round on the young fellows in the gallery. However, the lion leaped on her with great fury, and we gave her for gone; but on a sudden he let go his hold, and turned from her as if he was nauseated; then gave her a lash with his tail; after which she returned to the gallery; not the least out of countenance: and this, it seems, was the usual treatment of coquettes.

"I thought we had seen enough: but my friend would needs have us go and visit one or two lions in the city. We called at two or three dens where they happened not to show; but we generally found half-a-score young girls, between eight and eleven years old, playing with each lion, sitting on his back, and putting their hands into his mouth; some of them would now and then get a scratch, but we always discovered, upon examining, that they had been hoidening with the young apprentices. One of them was calling to a pretty girl, about twelve years old, who stood by us in the gallery, to come down to the lion, and upon her refusal, said, 'Ah! miss Betty, we could never get you to come near the lion since you played at hoop and hide with my brother in the garret.'

"We followed a couple, with the wedding-folks, going to the church of St. Mary-Axe. The lady, though well

stricken in years, extremely crooked and deformed, was dressed out beyond the gaiety of fifteen; having jumbled together, as I imagined, all the tawdry remains of aunts, godmothers, and grandmothers, for some generations past. One of the neighbours whispered me, that she was an old maid, and had the clearest reputation of any in the parish. There is nothing strange in that, thought I; but was much surprised when I observed afterward, that she went toward the lion with distrust and concern. The beast was lying down; but, upon sight of her, snuffed up his nose two or three times, and then, giving the sign of death, proceeded instantly to execution. In the midst of her agonies, she was heard to name the words Italy and artifices with the utmost horror, and several execrations, and at last concluded, 'Fool that I was, to put so much confidence in the toughness of my skin!'

"The keeper immediately set all in order again for another customer, which happened to be a famous prude, whom her parents, after long threatenings and much persuasion, had, with the extremest difficulty, prevailed on to accept a young handsome goldsmith, who might have pretended to five times her fortune. The fathers and mothers in the neighbourhood used to quote her for an example to their daughters; her elbows were riveted to her sides, and her whole person so ordered, as to inform everybody that she was afraid they should touch her. She only dreaded to approach the lion, because it was a he one, and abhorred to think a male animal should presume to breathe on her. The sight of a man at twenty yards' distance made her draw back her head. She always sat upon the further corner of the chair, although there were six chairs between her and her lover, and with the door wide open, and her little sister in the room. She was never saluted but at the

tip of the ear; and her father had much ado to make her dine without her gloves, when there was a man at table. She entered the den with some fear, which we took to proceed from the height of her modesty, offended at the sight of so many men in the gallery. The lion, beholding her at a distance, immediately gave the deadly sign, at which the poor creature (methinks I see her still!) miscarried in a fright before us all. The lion seemed to be as much surprised as we, and gave her time to make her confession; 'That she was five months gone by the foreman of her father's shop; and that this was her third big belly:' and when her friends asked, why she would venture the trial? she said, her nurse told her, that a lion would never hurt a woman with child." Upon this I immediately awaked, and could not help wishing that the deputy censors of my late institution were endued with the same instinct as these parish lions.

# THE TATLER, No. 20.

"Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores." —OVID.

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 1710-11.

From my own Apartment in Channel-row, March 5.

THOSE inferior duties of life, which the French call *les petites morales*, or the smaller morals, are, with us, distinguished by the name of good manners, or breeding. This I look upon, in the general notion of it, to be a sort of artificial good sense, adapted to the meanest capacities, and introduced to make mankind easy in their commerce with each other. Low and little understandings, without some rules of this kind, would be perpetually wandering into a thousand indecencies and irregularities in behaviour; and in their ordinary conversation, fall into the same boisterous familiarities that one observes among them when a debauch has quite taken away the use of their reason. In other instances it is odd to consider, that, for want of common discretion, the very end of good breeding is wholly perverted; and civility, intended to make us easy, is employed in laying chains and fetters upon us, in debarring us of our wishes, and in crossing our most reasonable desires and inclinations. This abuse reigns chiefly in the country, as I found, to my vexation, when I was last there, in a visit I made to a neighbour about two miles from my cousin. As soon as I entered the parlour, they put me into the great chair that stood close by a huge fire, and kept me there by force, until

I was almost stifled. Then a boy came in a great hurry to pull off my boots, which I in vain opposed, urging that I must return soon after dinner. In the meantime, the good lady whispered her eldest daughter, and slipped a key into her hand; the girl returned instantly with a beer glass half full of *aqua mirabilis* and syrup of gilly-flowers. I took as much as I had a mind for, but madam avowed that I should drink it off; for she was sure it would do me good after coming out of the cold air; and I was forced to obey, which absolutely took away my stomach. When dinner came in, I had a mind to sit at a distance from the fire; but they told me it was as much as my life was worth, and set me with my back against it. Although my appetite was quite gone, I was resolved to force down as much as I could, and desired the leg of a pullet. "Indeed, Mr. Bickerstaff (says the lady), you must eat a wing to oblige me;" and so put a couple upon my plate. I was persecuted at this rate during the whole meal; as often as I called for small-beer, the master tipped the wink, and the servant brought me a brimmer of October. Some time after dinner, I ordered my cousin's man, who came with me, to get the horses ready; but it was resolved that I should not stir that night; and when I seemed pretty much bent upon going, they ordered the stable-door to be locked, and the children hid my cloak and boots. The next question was, What would I have for supper? I said, I never eat anything at night: but was at last, in my own defence, obliged to name the first thing that came into my head. After three hours spent chiefly in apologies for my entertainment, insinuating to me, "that this was the worst time in the year for provisions; that they were at a great distance from any market; that they were afraid I should be starved; and that they knew they kept me to my loss;" the lady went

and left me to her husband; for they took special care I should never be alone. As soon as her back was turned, the little misses ran backward and forward every moment, and constantly as they came in, or went out, made a curtsey directly at me, which, in good manners, I was forced to return with a bow, and "Your humble servant, pretty miss." Exactly at eight the mother came up, and discovered, by the redness of her face, that supper was not far off. It was twice as large as the dinner, and my persecution doubled in proportion. I desired, at my usual hour, to go to my repose, and was conducted to my chamber by the gentleman, his lady, and the whole train of children. They importuned me to drink something before I went to bed; and, upon my refusing, left at last a bottle of stingo, as they called it, for fear I should wake, and be thirsty in the night. I was forced in the morning to rise and dress myself in the dark, because they would not suffer my kinsman's servant to disturb me at the hour I desired to be called. I was now resolved to break through all measures to get away; and, after sitting down to a monstrous breakfast of cold beef, mutton, neats' tongues, venison-pasty, and stale beer, took leave of the family. But the gentleman would needs see me part of the way, and carry me a short cut through his own ground, which he told me would save half-a-mile's riding. This last piece of civility had like to have cost me dear, being once or twice in danger of my neck, by leaping over his ditches, and at last forced to alight in the dirt, when my horse, having slipped his bridle, ran away, and took us up more than an hour to recover him again.

It is evident that none of the absurdities I met with in this visit proceeded from an ill intention, but from a wrong judgment of complaisance, and a misapplication in the rules

of it. I cannot so easily excuse the more refined critics upon behaviour, who, having professed no other study, are yet infinitely defective in the most material parts of it. Ned Fashion has been bred all his life about court, and understands to a tittle all the punctilios of a drawing-room. He visits most of the fine women near St. James's, and, upon every occasion, says the civilest and softest things to them of any breathing. To M. Le Sack* he owes an easy slide in his bow, and a graceful manner of coming into a room: but, in some other cases, he is very far from being a well-bred person. He laughs at men of far superior understanding to his own, for not being as well dressed as himself; despises all his acquaintance who are not of quality, and in public places has, on that account, often avoided taking notice of some among the best speakers of the House of Commons. He rails strenuously at both universities before the members of either; and is never heard to swear an oath, and break in upon religion and morality, except in the company of divines. On the other hand, a man of right sense has all the essentials of good breeding, although he may be wanting in the forms of it. Horatio has spent most of his time at Oxford: he has a great deal of learning, an agreeable wit, and as much modesty as may serve to adorn, without concealing, his other good qualities. In that retired way of living, he seems to have formed a notion of human nature, as he has found it described in the writings of the greatest men, not as he is likely to meet with it in the common course of life. Hence it is that he gives no offence, but converses with great deference, candour, and humanity. His bow, I must confess, is somewhat awkward; but then he has an extensive, universal, and unaffected knowledge, which may,

* A famous dancing-master.

perhaps, a little excuse him. He would make no extraordinary figure at a ball; but I can assure the ladies, in his behalf, and for their own consolation, that he has writ better verses on the sex than any man now living, and is preparing such a poem for the press as will transmit their praises and his own to many generations.

## HINTS ON GOOD MANNERS.

Good manners is the art of making every reasonable person in the company easy, and to be easy ourselves.

What passes for good manners in the world generally produces quite contrary effects.

Many persons of both sexes, whom I have known, and who passed for well-bred in their own and the world's opinion, are the most troublesome in company to others and themselves.

Nothing is so great an instance of ill manners as flattery. If you flatter all the company, you please none: if you flatter only one or two, you affront the rest.

Flattery is the worst and falsest way of showing our esteem.

Where the company meets, I am confident the few reasonable persons are every minute tempted to curse the man or woman among them who endeavours to be most distinguished for their good manners.

A man of sense would rather fast till night than dine at some tables, where the lady of the house is possessed with good manners; uneasiness, pressing to eat, teazing with civility; less practised in England than here.

Courts are the worst of all schools to teach good manners.

A courtly bow, or gait, or dress, are no part of good manners; and therefore every man of good understanding is capable of being well-bred upon any occasion.

To speak in such a manner as may possibly offend any reasonable person in company, is the highest instance of ill

manners. Good manners chiefly consist in action, not in words. Modesty and humility the chief ingredients.

I have known the court of England under four reigns, the two last but for a short time; and whatever good manners or politeness I observed in any of them, was not of the court growth, but imported; for a courtier by trade, as gentlemen ushers, bed-chamberwomen, maids of honour. . . .

### OF GOOD MANNERS AS TO CONVERSATION.

Men of wit and good understanding, as well as breeding, are sometimes deceived, and give offence by conceiving a better opinion of those with whom they converse than they ought to do. Thus I have often known the most innocent raillery, and even of that kind which was meant for praise, to be mistaken for abuse and reflection.

Of gibing, and how gibers ought to suffer.

Of arguers, perpetual contradictors, long talkers, those who are absent in company, interrupters, not listeners, loud laughers.

Of those men and women whose face is ever in a smile, talk ever with a smile, condole with a smile, etc.

Argument, as usually managed, is the worst sort of conversation; as it is generally in books the worst sort of reading.

Good conversation is not to be expected in much company, because few listen, and there is continual interruption. But good or ill manners are discovered, let the company be ever so large.

Perpetual aiming at wit, a very bad part of conversation. It is done to support a character; it generally fails: it is a sort of insult on the company, and a constraint upon the speaker.

For a man to talk in his own trade, or business, or faculty, is a great breach of good manners. Divines, physicians, lawyers, soldiers, particularly poets, are frequently guilty of this weakness. A poet conceives that the whole kingdom. . . .

# HINTS TOWARD AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION.

I HAVE observed few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or at least so slightly, handled as this; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seems so much to be said.

Most things pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life, our wit or folly have so refined, that they seldom subsist but in idea; a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection: but in conversation it is, or might be, otherwise; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remains as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seems to me, that the truest way to understand conversation, is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requires few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire, without any great genius or study. For nature has left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company; and there are a hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldomer observed, since there are few so obvious, or acknowledged, into which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance: nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talking too much; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together, where some one among them has not been predominant in that kind, to the great constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober, deliberate talker, who proceeds with much thought and caution, makes his preface, branches out into several digressions, finds a hint that puts him in mind of another story, which he promises to tell you when this is done; comes back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holding his head, complains of his memory; the whole company all this while in suspense; at length says, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proves at last a story the company has heard fifty times before; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is that of those who affect to talk of themselves: some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in

love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise: they will call a witness to remember they always foretold what would happen in such a case, but none would believe them; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences, just as they happened; but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults; they are the strangest men in the world; they cannot dissemble; they own it is a folly; they have lost abundance of advantages by it; but if you would give them the world, they cannot help it; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint; with many other insufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others; without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men, than theirs have with him; and how little that is he is sensible enough.

Where a company has met, I often have observed two persons discover, by some accident, that they were bred together at the same school or university; after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army who will sit for some time with a supercilious and impatient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking; at length, of a sudden, demanding audience, decide the matter in a short dogmatical way; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation which none are so subject to as the men of wit, nor ever so much as when

they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost: it is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers-by may be disappointed, and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought together in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside: he neither expects to be informed or entertained, but to display his own talents. His business is to be good company, and not good conversation; and therefore he chooses to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Will's coffee-house, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble; that is to say, five or six men who had writ plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling composures, in so important an air as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them; and they were usually attended with an humble audience of young students from the inns of court, or the universities; who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash, under the name of politeness, criticism, and belles lettres.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not properly used; because pedantry is the too frequent or unreasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it; by which definition, men of the court, or the army, may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine; and it is the same vice in women, when they are over copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take; because, besides the imputation of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

The great town is usually provided with some player, mimic, or buffoon, who has a general reception at the good tables; familiar and domestic with persons of the first quality, and usually sent for at every meeting to divert the company; against which I have no objection. You go there as to a farce or a puppet-show; your business is only to laugh in season, either out of inclination or civility, while this merry companion is acting his part. It is a business he has undertaken, and we are to suppose he is paid for his day's work. I only quarrel, when, in select and private meetings, where men of wit and learning are invited to pass an evening, this jester should be admitted to run over his circle of tricks, and make the whole company unfit for any other conversation, beside the indignity of confounding men's talents at so shameful a rate.

Raillery is the finest part of conversation; but, as it is our usual custom to counterfeit and adulterate whatever is too dear for us, so we have done with this, and turned

it all into what is generally called repartee, or being smart; just as when an expensive fashion comes up, those who are not able to reach it content themselves with some paltry imitation. It now passes for raillery to run a man down in discourse, to put him out of countenance, and make him ridiculous; sometimes to expose the defects of his person or understanding; on all which occasions, he is obliged not to be angry, to avoid the imputation of not being able to take a jest. It is admirable to observe one who is dexterous at this art, singling out a weak adversary, getting the laugh on his side, and then carrying all before him. The French, from whence we borrow the word, have a quite different idea of the thing, and so had we in the politer age of our fathers. Raillery was to say something that at first appeared a reproach or reflection, but, by some turn of wit, unexpected and surprising, ended always in a compliment, and to the advantage of the person it was addressed to. And surely one of the best rules in conversation is, never to say a thing which any of the company can reasonably wish we had rather left unsaid: nor can there anything be well more contrary to the ends for which people meet together, than to part unsatisfied with each other or themselves.

There are two faults in conversation, which appear very different, yet arise from the same root, and are equally blameable; I mean an impatience to interrupt others; and the uneasiness of being interrupted ourselves. The two chief ends of conversation are to entertain and improve those we are among, or to receive those benefits ourselves; which whoever will consider, cannot easily run into either of these two errors; because, when any man speaks in company, it is to be supposed he does it for his hearers' sake, and not his own; so that common discretion will teach us not to

force their attention, if they are not willing to lend it; nor, on the other side, to interrupt him who is in possession, because that is in the grossest manner to give the preference to our own good sense.

There are some people whose good manners will not suffer them to interrupt you, but, what is almost as bad, will discover abundance of impatience, and lie upon the watch until you have done, because they have started something in their own thoughts, which they long to be delivered of. Meantime, they are so far from regarding what passes, that their imaginations are wholly turned upon what they have in reserve, for fear it should slip out of their memory; and thus they confine their invention, which might otherwise range over a hundred things full as good, and that might be much more naturally introduced.

There is a sort of rude familiarity, which some people, by practising among their intimates, have introduced into their general conversation, and would have it pass for innocent freedom or humour; which is a dangerous experiment in our northern climate, where all the little decorum and politeness we have are purely forced by art, and are so ready to lapse into barbarity. This, among the Romans, was the raillery of slaves, of which we have many instances in Plautus. It seems to have been introduced among us by Cromwell, who, by preferring the scum of the people, made it a court entertainment, of which I have heard many particulars; and, considering all things were turned upside down, it was reasonable and judicious; although it was a piece of policy found out to ridicule a point of honour in the other extreme, when the smallest word misplaced among gentlemen ended in a duel.

There are some men excellent at telling a story, and provided with a plentiful stock of them, which they can

draw out upon occasion in all companies; and, considering how low conversation runs now among us, it is not altogether a contemptible talent; however, it is subject to two unavoidable defects, frequent repetition, and being soon exhausted; so that, whoever values this gift in himself, has need of a good memory, and ought frequently to shift his company, that he may not discover the weakness of his fund; for those who are thus endued have seldom any other revenue, but live upon the main stock.

Great speakers in public are seldom agreeable in private conversation, whether their faculty be natural, or acquired by practice, and often venturing. Natural elocution, although it may seem a paradox, usually springs from a barrenness of invention, and of words; by which men who have only one stock of notions upon every subject, and one set of phrases to express them in, they swim upon the superficies, and offer themselves on every occasion; therefore men of much learning, and who know the compass of a language, are generally the worst talkers on a sudden, until much practice has inured and emboldened them; because they are confounded with plenty of matter, variety of notions and of words, which they cannot readily choose, but are perplexed and entangled by too great a choice; which is no disadvantage in private conversation; where, on the other side, the talent of haranguing is, of all others, most unsupportable.

Nothing has spoiled men more for conversation than the character of being wits; to support which they never fail of encouraging a number of followers and admirers, who list themselves in their service, wherein they find their accounts on both sides by pleasing their mutual vanity. This has given the former such an air of superiority, and made the latter so pragmatical, that neither of them are

well to be endured. I say nothing here of the itch of dispute and contradiction, telling of lies, or of those who are troubled with the disease called the wandering of the thoughts, so that they are never present in mind at what passes in discourse; for whoever labours under any of these possessions, is as unfit for conversation as a madman in Bedlam.

I think I have gone over most of the errors in conversation that have fallen under my notice or memory, except some that are merely personal, and others too gross to need exploding; such as lewd or profane talk; but I pretend only to treat the errors of conversation in general, and not the several subjects of discourse, which would be infinite. Thus we see how human nature is most debased, by the abuse of that faculty which is held the great distinction between men and brutes: and how little advantage we make of that, which might be the greatest, the most lasting, and the most innocent, as well as useful pleasure of life: in default of which we are forced to take up with those poor amusements of dress and visiting, or the more pernicious ones of play, drink, and vicious amours; whereby the nobility and gentry of both sexes are entirely corrupted, both in body and mind, and have lost all notions of love, honour, friendship, generosity: which, under the name of fopperies, have been for some time laughed out of doors.

This degeneracy of conversation, with the pernicious consequences thereof upon our humours and dispositions, has been owing, among other causes, to the custom arisen, for some time past, of excluding women from any share in our society, further than in parties at play, or dancing, or in the pursuit of an amour. I take the highest period of politeness in England (and it is of the same date in

France) to have been the peaceable part of king Charles I.'s reign, and from what we read of those times, as well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversation were altogether different from ours: several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started; and although we are apt to ridicule the sublime Platonic notions they had, or personated, in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of the romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature, without which it is apt to degenerate into everything that is sordid, vicious, and low. If there were no other use in the conversation of ladies, it is sufficient that it would lay a restrain upon those odious topics of immodesty and indecencies, into which the rudeness of our northern genius is so apt to fall. And, therefore, it is observable in those sprightly gentlemen about the town, who are so very dexterous at entertaining a vizard mask in the park or the playhouse, that in the company of ladies of virtue and honour, they are silent and disconcerted, and out of their element.

There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, nor at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and

phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. It is not a fault in company to talk much; but to continue it long is certainly one; for, if the majority of those who are got together be naturally silent or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them, who can start new subjects, provided he does not dwell upon them, that leave room for answers and replies.

## A TRUE AND FAITHFUL NARRATIVE

OF WHAT PASSED IN LONDON DURING THE GENERAL CONSTERNATION OF ALL RANKS AND DEGREES OF MANKIND, ON TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, AND FRIDAY LAST.

On Tuesday, the 13th of October, Mr Whiston* held a lecture near the Royal Exchange to an audience of fourteen worthy citizens, his subscribers and constant hearers. Besides these there were five chance auditors for that night only, who had paid their shillings apiece. I think myself obliged to be very particular in this relation lest my veracity should be suspected, which makes me appeal to the men who were present, of which number I myself was one. Their names are—

Henry Watson, haberdasher.
George Hancock, druggist.
John Lewis, drysalter.
William Jones, cornchandler.
Henry Theobald, watchmaker.
James Peters, draper.
Thomas Floyer, silversmith.
John Wells, brewer.
Samuel Greg, soapboiler.
William Cooley, fishmonger.
James Harper, hosier.
Robert Tucker, stationer.
George Ford, ironmonger.
Daniel Lynch, apothecary.
William Bennet,
David Somers,
Charles Lock,
Leonard Daval,
Henry Croft,
} apprentices.

* A Clergyman, who died August 22, 1752, aged 85.

Mr. Whiston began by acquainting us that (contrary to his advertisement) he thought himself in duty and conscience obliged to change the subject-matter of his intended discourse. Here he paused, and seemed for a short space, as it were, lost in devotion and mental prayer, after which, with great earnestness and vehemence, he spake as follows :—

"Friends and fellow-citizens, all speculative science is at an end ; the period of all things is at hand : on Friday next this world shall be no more. Put not your confidence in me, brethren, for to-morrow morning, five minutes after five, the truth will be evident ; in that instant the comet shall appear of which I have heretofore warned you. As ye have heard, believe. Go hence and prepare your wives, your families, and friends for the universal change."

At this solemn and dreadful prediction the whole society appeared in the utmost astonishment : but it would be unjust not to remember that Mr. Whiston himself was in so calm a temper as to return a shilling a-piece to the youths, who had been disappointed of their lecture, which I thought, from a man of his integrity, a convincing proof of his own faith in the prediction.

As we thought it a duty in charity to warn all men, in two or three hours the news had spread through the city. At first, indeed, our report met with but little credit, it being by our greatest dealers in stocks thought only a court artifice to sink them, that some choice favourites might purchase at a lower rate ; for the South Sea that very evening fell five per cent., the Indian eleven, and all the other funds in proportion. But at the court end of the town our attestations were entirely disbelieved or turned into ridicule, yet nevertheless the news spread everywhere and was the subject-matter of all conversation.

That very night (as I was credibly informed) Mr. Whiston was sent for to a great lady who is very curious in the learned sciences, and addicted to all the speculative doubts of the most able philosophers, but he was not now to be found; and since at other times he has been known not to decline that honour, I make no doubt he concealed himself to attend the great business of his soul: but whether it was the lady's faith or inquisitiveness that occasioned her to send is a point I shall not presume to determine. As for his being sent for to the secretary's office by a messenger, it is now known to be a matter notoriously false, and indeed at first it had little credit with me that so zealous and honest a man should be ordered into custody as a seditious preacher, who is known to be so well-affected to the present happy establishment.

It was now I reflected, with exceeding trouble and sorrow, that I had disused family prayers for above five years, and (though it has been a custom of late entirely neglected by men of any business or station) I determined within myself no longer to omit so reasonable and religious a duty. I acquainted my wife with my intentions, but two or three neighbours having been engaged to sup with us that night, and many hours being unwarily spent at cards, I was prevailed upon by her to put it off till the next day; she reasoning that it would be time enough to take off the servants from their business (which this practice must infallibly occasion for an hour or two every day) after the comet had made its appearance.

Zachery Lowen, a quaker, and my next neighbour, had no sooner heard of the prophecy but he made me a visit. I informed him of everything I had heard, but found him quite obstinate in his unbelief; for, said he, be comforted, friend, thy tidings are impossibilities, for were these things

to happen they must have been foreseen by some of our brethren. This indeed (as in all other spiritual cases with this set of people) was his only reason against believing me; and as he was fully persuaded that the prediction was erroneous, he in a very neighbourly manner admonished me against selling my stock at the present low price, which, he said, beyond dispute must have a rise before Monday, when this unreasonable consternation should be over.

But on Wednesday morning (I believe to the exact calculation of Mr. Whiston) the comet appeared; for at three minutes after five by my own watch I saw it. He, indeed, foretold that it would be seen at five minutes after five; but as the best watches may be a minute or two too slow, I am apt to think his calculation just to a minute.

In less than a quarter of an hour all Cheapside was crowded with a vast concourse of people, and notwithstanding it was so early, it is thought that through all that part of the town there was not man, woman, or child, except the sick or infirm, left in their beds. From my own balcony I am confident I saw several thousands in the street, and counted at least seventeen who were upon their knees, and seemed in actual devotion. Eleven of them, indeed, appeared to be old women of about fourscore; the six others were men in advanced life, but (as I could guess) two of them might be under seventy.

It is highly probable that an event of this nature may be passed over by the greater historians of our times, as conducing very little or nothing to the unravelling and laying open the deep schemes of politicians and mysteries of state; for which reason I thought it might not be unacceptable to record the facts which in the space of three days came to my knowledge, either as an eye-witness or from unquestionable authorities; nor can I think this narrative

will be entirely without its use, as it may enable us to form a more just idea of our countrymen in general, particularly in regard to their faith, religion, morals, and politics.

Before Wednesday noon the belief was universal that the day of judgment was at hand, insomuch that a waterman of my acquaintance told me he counted no less than one hundred and twenty-three clergymen who had been ferried over to Lambeth before twelve o'clock; these, it is said, went thither to petition that a short prayer might be penned and ordered, there being none in the service upon that occasion. But as in things of this nature it is necessary that the council be consulted, their request was not immediately complied with, and this I affirm to be the true and only reason that the churches were not that morning so well attended, and is in noways to be imputed to the fears and consternation of the clergy, with which the free-thinkers have since very unjustly reproached them.

My wife and I went to church (where we had not been for many years on a week-day), and with a very large congregation were disappointed of the service.

But (what will be scarce credible) by the carelessness of a 'prentice, in our absence we had a piece of fine cambric carried off by a shoplifter, so little impression was yet made on the minds of those wicked women!

I cannot omit the care of a particular director of the bank; I hope the worthy and wealthy knight will forgive me that I endeavour to do him justice; for it was unquestionably owing to Sir Gilbert Heathcote's sagacity that all the fire offices were required to have a particular eye upon the bank of England. Let it be recorded to his praise, that in the general hurry this struck him as his nearest and tenderest concern; but the next day in the evening, after having taken due care of all his books, bills, and

bonds, I was informed his mind was wholly turned upon spiritual matters, yet ever and anon he could not help expressing his resentment against the Tories and Jacobites, to whom he imputed that sudden run upon the bank which happened on this occasion.

A great man (whom at this time it may not be prudent to name) employed all the Wednesday morning to make up such an account as might appear fair in case he should be called upon to produce it on the Friday; but was forced to desist, after having for several hours together attempted it, not being able to bring himself to a resolution to trust the many hundred articles of his secret transactions upon paper.

Another seemed to be very melancholy, which his flatterers imputed to his dread of losing his power in a day or two; but I rather take it that his chief concern was the terror of being tried in a court that could not be influenced, and where a majority of voices could avail him nothing. It was observed, too, that he had but few visitors that day. This added so much to his mortification, that he read through the first chapter of the book of Job, and wept over it bitterly; in short, he seemed a true penitent in everything but in charity to his neighbour. No business was that day done in his counting-house. It is said, too, that he was advised to restitution, but I never heard that he complied with it, any further than in giving half-a-crown a-piece to several crazed and starving creditors who attended in the outward room.

Three of the maids-of-honour sent to countermand their birthday clothes; two of them burnt all their collections of novels and romances, and sent to a bookseller's in Pall-mall to buy each of them a bible and *Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.* But I must do all of them the justice to

acknowledge that they showed a very decent behaviour in the drawing-room, and restrained themselves from those innocent freedoms and little levities so commonly incident to young ladies of their profession. So many birthday suits were countermanded the next day, that most of the tailors and mantua-makers discharged all their journeymen and women. A grave elderly lady of great erudition and modesty, who visits these young ladies, seemed to be extremely shocked by the apprehensions that she was to appear naked before the whole world; and no less so, that all mankind was to appear naked before her; which might so much divert her thoughts as to incapacitate her to give ready and apt answers to the interrogatories that might be made her. The maids-of-honour, who had both modesty and curiosity, could not imagine the sight so disagreeable as was represented; nay, one of them went so far as to say she perfectly longed to see it; for it could not be so indecent when everybody was to be alike; and they had a day or two to prepare themselves to be seen in that condition. Upon this reflection, each of them ordered a bathing-tub to be got ready that evening, and a looking-glass to be set by it. So much are these young ladies, both by nature and custom, addicted to cleanly appearance.

A west-country gentleman told me he got a church-lease filled up that morning for the same sum which had been refused for three years successively. I must impute this merely to accident; for I cannot imagine that any divine could take the advantage of his tenant in so unhandsome a manner, or that the shortness of the life was in the least his consideration; though I have heard the same worthy prelate aspersed and maligned since upon this very account.

The term being so near, the alarm among the lawyers was inexpressible, though some of them, I was told, were so

vain as to promise themselves some advantage in making their defence by being versed in the practice of our earthly courts. It is said, too, that some of the chief pleaders were heard to express great satisfaction that there had been but few state trials of late years. Several attorneys demanded the return of fees that had been given the lawyers; but it was answered, the fee was undoubtedly charged to their client, and that they could not connive at such injustice as to suffer it to be sunk in the attorneys' pockets. Our sage and learned judges had great consolation, insomuch as they had not pleaded at the bar for several years; the barristers rejoiced in that they were not attorneys, and the attorneys felt no less satisfaction that they were not pettifoggers, scriveners, and other meaner officers of the law.

As to the army, far be it from me to conceal the truth. Every soldier's behaviour was as undismayed and undaunted as if nothing was to happen; I impute not this to their want of faith, but to their martial disposition; though I cannot help thinking they commonly accompany their commands with more oaths than are requisite, of which there was no remarkable diminution this morning on the parade in St. James's-park. But possibly it was by choice and on consideration that they continued this way of expression, not to intimidate the common soldiers, or give occasion to suspect that even the fear of damnation could make any impression upon their superior officers. A duel was fought the same morning between two colonels, not occasioned (as was reported) because the one was put over the other's head; that being a point which might at such a juncture have been accommodated by the mediation of friends; but as this was upon the account of a lady, it was judged it could not be put off at this time above all others, but demanded immediate satisfaction. I am apt to believe

that a young officer, who desired his surgeon to defer putting him into a salivation till Saturday, might make this request out of some opinion he had of the truth of the prophecy: for the apprehensions of any danger in the operation could not be his motive, the surgeon himself having assured me that he had before undergone three severe operations of the like nature with great resignation and fortitude.

There was an order issued that the chaplains of the several regiments should attend their duty; but as they were dispersed about in several parts of England, it was believed that most of them could not be found, or so much as heard of, till the great day was over.

Most of the considerable physicians, by their outward demeanour, seemed to be unbelievers; but at the same time they everywhere insinuated that there might be a pestilential malignancy in the air, occasioned by the comet, which might be armed against by proper and timely medicines. This caution had but little effect; for as the time approached, the Christian resignation of the people increased, and most of them (which was never before known) had their souls more at heart than their bodies.

If the reverend clergy showed more concern than others, I charitably impute it to their great charge of souls; and what confirmed me in this opinion was, that the degrees of apprehension and terror could be distinguished to be greater or less according to their ranks and degrees in the church.

The like might be observed in all sorts of ministers, though not of the Church of England; the higher their rank, the more was their fear.

I speak not of the court, for fear of offence; and I forbear inserting the names of particular persons, to avoid the imputation of slander; so that the reader will allow the narrative

must be deficient, and is therefore desired to accept hereof rather as a sketch than a regular circumstantial history.

I was not informed of any persons who showed the least joy; except three malefactors who were to be executed on the Monday following, and one old man, a constant church-goer, who, being at the point of death, expressed some satisfaction at the news.

On Thursday morning there was little or nothing transacted in 'Change-alley; there were a multitude of sellers, but so few buyers that one cannot affirm the stocks bore any certain price except among the Jews, who this day reaped great profit by their infidelity. There were many who called themselves Christians, who offered to buy for time; but as these were people of great distinction, I choose not to mention them, because in effect it would seem to accuse them both of avarice and infidelity.

The run upon the bank is too well known to need a particular relation; for it never can be forgotten that no one person whatever (except the directors themselves and some of their particular friends and associates) could convert a bill all that day into specie; all hands being employed to serve them.

In the several churches of the city and suburbs there were seven thousand two hundred and forty-five who publicly and solemnly declared before the congregation that they took to wife their several kept mistresses, which was allowed as valid marriage, the priest not having time to pronounce the ceremony in form.

At St. Bride's church in Fleet-street Mr. Woolston (who writ against the miracles of our Saviour), in the utmost terrors of conscience, made a public recantation. Dr. Mandeville* (who had been groundlessly reported formerly

* Author of *The Fable of the Bees.*

to have done the same) did it now in good earnest at St. James's-gate; as did also at the Temple church several gentlemen who frequent coffee-houses near the bar. So great was the faith and fear of two of them that they dropped dead on the spot; but I will not record their names, lest I should be thought invidiously to lay an odium on their families and posterity.

Most of the players who had very little faith before were now desirous of having as much as they could, and therefore embraced the Roman Catholic religion: the same thing was observed of some bawds and ladies of pleasure.

An Irish gentleman out of pure friendship came to make me a visit, and advised me to hire a boat for the ensuing day, and told me that unless I gave earnest for one immediately he feared it might be too late; for his countrymen had secured almost every boat upon the river, as judging that, in the general conflagration, to be upon the water would be the safest place.

There were two lords and three commoners who, out of scruple of conscience, very hastily threw up their pensions, as imagining a pension was only an annual retaining bribe. All the other great pensioners I was told had their scruples quieted by a clergyman or two of distinction, whom they happily consulted.

It was remarkable that several of our very richest tradesmen of the city in common charity gave away shillings and sixpences to the beggars who plied about the church-doors; and at a particular church in the city a wealthy churchwarden with his own hands distributed fifty twelve-penny loaves to the poor, by way of restitution for the many great and costly feasts which he had eaten of at their expense.

Three great ladies, a valet-de-chambre, two lords, a

custom-house officer, five half-pay captains, and a baronet (all noted gamesters) came publicly into a church at Westminster, and deposited a very considerable sum of money in the minister's hands; the parties whom they had defrauded being either out of town or not to be found. But so great is the hardness of heart of this fraternity, that among either the noble or vulgar gamesters (though the profession is so general) I did not hear of any other restitution of this sort. At the same time I must observe that (in comparison of these), through all parts of the town, the justice and penitence of the highwaymen, housebreakers, and common pickpockets were very remarkable.

The directors of our public companies were in such dreadful apprehensions that one would have thought a parliamentary inquiry was at hand; yet so great was their presence of mind, that all the Thursday morning was taken up in private transfers, which by malicious people was thought to be done with design to conceal their effects.

I forbear mentioning the private confessions of particular ladies to their husbands; for as their children were born in wedlock, and of consequence are legitimate, it would be an invidious task to record them as bastards; and particularly after their several husbands have so charitably forgiven them.

The evening and night through the whole town were spent in devotions both public and private; the churches for this one day were so crowded by the nobility and gentry, that thousands of common people were seen praying in the public streets. In short, one would have thought the whole town had been really and seriously religious. But what was very remarkable, all the different persuasions kept by themselves, for, as each thought the other would be damned, not one would join in prayer with the other.

At length Friday came, and the people covered all the streets; expecting, watching, and praying. But as the day wore away their fears first began to abate, then lessened every hour; at night they were almost extinct, till the total darkness that hitherto used to terrify, now comforted every free-thinker and atheist. Great numbers went together to the taverns, bespoke suppers, and broke up whole hogsheads for joy. The subject of all wit and conversation was to ridicule the prophecy and rally each other. All the quality and gentry were perfectly ashamed, nay, some utterly disowned that they had manifested any signs of religion.

But the next day, even the common people as well as their betters appeared in their usual state of indifference. They drank, they whored, they swore, they lied, they cheated, they quarrelled, they murdered. In short, the world went on in the old channel.

I need not give any instances of what will so easily be credited; but I cannot omit relating that Mr. Woolston advertised in that very Saturday's *Evening Post*, a *New Treatise against the Miracles of our Saviour;* and that the few who had given up their pensions the day before solicited to have them continued; which, as they had not been thrown up upon any ministerial point, I am informed was readily granted.

# A SERMON

## ON SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

ACTS XX. 9.

*And there sat in the window a certain young man, named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and while Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.*

I HAVE chosen these words with design, if possible, to disturb some part in this audience of half-an-hour's sleep, for the convenience and exercise whereof this place, at this season of the day, is very much celebrated.

There is, indeed, one mortal disadvantage to which all preaching is subject; that those who by the wickedness of their lives stand in greatest need have usually the smallest share; for either they are absent upon the account of idleness or spleen, or hatred to religion, or in order to doze away the intemperance of the week: or, if they do come, they are sure to employ their minds rather any other way than regarding or attending to the business of the place.

The accident which happened to this young man in the text hath not been sufficient to discourage his successors; but, because the preachers now in the world, however they may exceed St. Paul in the art of setting men to sleep, do extremely fall short of him in the working of miracles; therefore men are become so cautious, as to choose more safe and convenient stations and postures for taking their repose, without hazard of their persons; and upon the whole matter, choose rather to trust their destruction to a

miracle, than their safety. However, this being not the only way by which the lukewarm Christians and scorners of the age discover their neglect and contempt of preaching, I shall enter expressly into consideration of this matter, and order my discourse in the following method :—

*First*, I shall produce several instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

*Secondly*, I shall reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching.

*Thirdly*, I shall set forth the great evil of this neglect and contempt of preaching, and discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

*Lastly*, I shall offer some remedies against this great and spreading evil.

*First*, I shall produce certain instances to show the great neglect of preaching now among us.

These may be reduced under two heads. First, men's absence from the service of the church; and secondly, their misbehaviour when they are here.

The first instance of men's neglect is in their frequent absence from the church.

There is no excuse so trivial that will not pass upon some men's consciences to excuse their attendance at the public worship of God. Some are so unfortunate as to be always indisposed on the Lord's-day, and think nothing so unwholesome as the air of a church. Others have their affairs so oddly contrived, as to be always unluckily prevented by business. With some it is a great mark of wit and deep understanding to stay at home on Sundays. Others again discover strange fits of laziness, that seize them particularly on that day, and confine them to their beds. Others are absent out of mere contempt of religion. And, lastly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of rest, and there-

fore claim the privilege of their cattle, to keep the Sabbath by eating, drinking, and sleeping, after the toil and labour of the week. Now in all this the worst circumstance is, that these persons are such whose companies are most required, and who stand most in need of a physician.

Secondly, Men's great neglect and contempt of preaching appear by their misbehaviour when at church.

If the audience were to be ranked under several heads, according to their behaviour when the word of God is delivered, how small a number would appear of those who receive it as they ought! How much of the seed then sown would be found to fall by the wayside upon stony ground, or among thorns; and how little good ground there would be to take it! A preacher cannot look round from the pulpit without observing that some are in a perpetual whisper, and by their air and gesture give occasion to suspect that they are in those very minutes defaming their neighbour. Others have their eyes and imagination constantly engaged in such a circle of objects, perhaps to gratify the most unwarrantable desires, that they never once attend to the business of the place; the sound of the preacher's words does not so much as once interrupt them. Some have their minds wandering among idle, worldly, or vicious thoughts. Some lie at catch to ridicule whatever they hear, and with much wit and humour provide a stock of laughter by furnishing themselves from the pulpit. But of all misbehaviour, none is comparable to that of those who come here to sleep. Opium is not so stupefying to many persons as an afternoon sermon. Perpetual custom hath so brought it about that the words of whatever preacher become only a sort of uniform sound at a distance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the senses. For that it is the very sound of the sermon which bindeth

up their faculties is manifest from hence, because they all awake so very regularly as soon as it ceaseth, and with much devotion receive the blessing, dozed and besotted with indecencies I am ashamed to repeat.

I proceed, secondly, to reckon up some of the usual quarrels men have against preaching, and to show the unreasonableness of them.

Such unwarrantable demeanour as I have described among Christians in the house of God in a solemn assembly, while their faith and duty are explained and delivered, have put those who are guilty upon inventing some excuses to extenuate their fault: this they do by turning the blame either upon the particular preacher, or upon preaching in general. First, they object against the particular preacher; his manner, his delivery, his voice are disagreeable; his style and expression are flat and slow, sometimes improper and absurd; the matter is heavy, trivial, and insipid, sometimes despicable and perfectly ridiculous; or else, on the other side, he runs up into unintelligible speculation, empty notions, and abstracted flights, all clad in words above usual understandings.

*Secondly*, They object against preaching in general; it is a perfect road of talk, they know already whatever can be said, they have heard the same a hundred times over. They quarrel that preachers do not relieve an old beaten subject with wit and invention, and that now the art is lost of moving men's passions, so common among the ancient orators of Greece and Rome. These and the like objections are frequently in the mouths of men who despise the foolishness of preaching. But let us examine the reasonableness of them.

The doctrine delivered by all preachers is the same: "So we preach, and so ye believe;" but the manner of delivering

is suited to the skill and abilities of each, which differ in preachers just as in the rest of mankind. However, in personal dislikes of a particular preacher, are these men sure they are always in the right? Do they consider how mixed a thing is every audience whose taste and judgment differ perhaps every day, not only from each other but themselves? and how to calculate a discourse that shall exactly suit them all is beyond the force and reach of human reason, knowledge, or invention. Wit and eloquence are shining qualities that God hath imparted in great degrees to very few; nor any more to be expected in the generality of any rank among men than riches and honour. But further, if preaching in general be all old and beaten, and that they are already so well acquainted with it, more shame and guilt to them who so little edify by it. But these men, whose ears are so delicate as not to endure a plain discourse of religion, who expect a constant supply of wit and eloquence on a subject handled so many thousand times; what will they say when we turn the objection upon themselves, who, with all the rude and profane liberty of discourse they take upon so many thousand subjects, are so dull as to furnish nothing but tedious repetitions, and little, paltry, nauseous commonplaces, so vulgar, so worn, or so obvious, as, upon any other occasion but that of advancing vice, would be hooted off the stage? Nor, lastly, are preachers justly blamed for neglecting human oratory to move the passions, which is not the business of a Christian orator, whose office it is only to work upon faith and reason. All other eloquence hath been a perfect cheat to stir up men's passions against truth and justice for the service of a faction; to put false colours upon things, and, by an amusement of agreeable words, make the worst reason appear to be the better. This is certainly not to be allowed in

Christian eloquence, and therefore St. Paul took quite the other course; he "came not with the excellency of words or enticing speech of men's wisdom, but in plain evidence of the spirit and power." And perhaps it was for that reason the young man Eutychus, used to the Grecian eloquence, grew tired and fell so fast asleep.

I go on, *thirdly*, to set forth the great evil of this neglect and scorn of preaching, and to discover the real causes whence it proceedeth.

I think it is obvious that this neglect of preaching hath very much occasioned the great decay of religion among us. To this may be imputed no small part of that contempt some men bestow on the clergy; for whoever talketh without being regarded, is sure to be despised. To this we owe in a great measure the spreading of atheism and infidelity among us, for religion, like all other things, is soonest put out of countenance by being ridiculed. The scorn of preaching might perhaps have been at first introduced by men of nice ears and refined taste; but it is now become a spreading evil through all degrees and both sexes; for since sleeping, talking, and laughing are qualities sufficient to furnish out a critic, the meanest and most ignorant have set up a title, and succeeded in it as well as their betters. Thus are the last efforts of reforming mankind rendered wholly useless. "How shall they hear," saith the Apostle, "without a preacher?" But if they have a preacher, and make it a point of wit or breeding not to hear him, what remedy is left? To this neglect of preaching we may also entirely impute that gross ignorance among us in the very principles of religion, which it is amazing to find in persons who very much value their own knowledge and understanding in other things; yet it is a visible, inexcusable ignorance even in the meanest among us, considering the

many advantages they have of learning their duty. And it hath been the great encouragement to all manner of vice: for in vain we preach down sin to a people "whose hearts are waxed gross, whose ears are dull of hearing, and whose eyes are closed." Therefore Christ himself, in his discourses, frequently rouseth up the attention of the multitude and of his disciples themselves with this expression, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." But among all neglects of preaching, none is so fatal as that of sleeping in the house of God. A scorner may listen to truth and reason and in time grow serious; an unbeliever may feel the pangs of a guilty conscience: one whose thoughts or eyes wander among other objects may, by a lucky word, be called back to attention; but the sleeper shuts up all avenues to his soul; he is "like the deaf adder that hearkeneth not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely." And we may preach with as good success to the grave that is under his feet.

But the great evil of this neglect will further yet appear, from considering the real causes whence it proceedeth; whereof the first I take to be an evil conscience. Many men come to church to save or gain a reputation, or because they will not be singular, but comply with an established custom; yet all the while they are loaded with the guilt of old-rooted sins. These men can expect to hear of nothing but terrors and threatenings, their sins laid open in true colours, and eternal misery the reward of them; therefore no wonder they stop their ears, and divert their thoughts, and seek any amusement rather than stir the hell within them.

Another cause of this neglect is a heart set upon worldly things. Men, whose minds are much enslaved to earthly affairs all the week, cannot disengage or break the chain of

their thoughts so suddenly as to apply to a discourse that is wholly foreign to what they have most at heart. Tell a usurer of charity, and mercy, and restitution, you talk to the deaf: his heart and soul, with all his senses, are got among his bags, or he is gravely asleep and dreaming of a mortgage. Tell a man of business that the cares of the world choke the good seed; that we must not encumber ourselves with much serving; that the salvation of his soul is the one thing necessary; you see, indeed, the shape of a man before you, but his faculties are all gone off among clients and papers, thinking how to defend a bad cause or find flaws in a good one; or he weareth out the time in drowsy nods.

A third cause of the great neglect and scorn of preaching ariseth from the practice of men who set up to decry and disparage religion; these, being zealous to promote infidelity and vice, learn a rote of buffoonery that serveth all occasions, and refutes the strongest arguments for piety and good manners. These have a set of ridicule calculated for all sermons and all preachers, and can be extremely witty as often as they please upon the same fund.

Let me now, in the last place, offer some remedies against this great evil.

It will be one remedy against the contempt of preaching rightly to consider the end for which it was designed. There are many who place abundance of merit in going to church, although it be with no other prospect but that of being well entertained, wherein if they happen to fail, they return wholly disappointed. Hence it is become an impertinent vein among people of all sorts to hunt after what they call a good sermon, as if it were a matter of pastime and diversion. Our business, alas! is quite another thing; either to learn, or at least be reminded of our duty,

to apply the doctrines delivered, compare the rules we hear with our lives and actions, and find wherein we have transgressed. These are the dispositions men should bring into the house of God, and then they will be little concerned about the preacher's wit or eloquence, nor be curious to inquire out his faults and infirmities, but consider how to correct their own.

Another remedy against the contempt of preaching is that men would consider whether it be not reasonable to give more allowance for the different abilities of preachers than they usually do. Refinements of style and flights of wit, as they are not properly the business of any preacher, so they cannot possibly be the talents of all. In most other discourses men are satisfied with sober sense and plain reason, and, as understandings usually go, even that is not over-frequent. Then why they should be so over-nice in expectation of eloquence, where it is neither necessary nor convenient, is hard to imagine.

*Lastly*, The scorners of preaching would do well to consider that this talent of ridicule they value so much is a perfection very easily acquired and applied to all things whatsoever, neither is anything at all the worse because it is capable of being perverted to burlesque; perhaps it may be the more perfect upon that score, since we know the most celebrated pieces have been thus treated with greatest success. It is in any man's power to suppose a fool's cap on the wisest head, and then laugh at his own supposition. I think there are not many things cheaper than supposing and laughing; and if the uniting these two talents can bring a thing into contempt, it is hard to know where it may end.

To conclude:—These considerations may perhaps have some effect while men are awake, but what arguments shall

we use to the sleeper? what methods shall we take to hold open his eyes? Will he be moved by considerations of common civility? We know it is reckoned a point of very bad manners to sleep in private company, when perhaps the tedious impertinence of many talkers would render it at least as excusable as the dullest sermon. Do they think it a small thing to watch four hours at a play where all virtue and religion are openly reviled, and can they not watch one half hour to hear them defended? Is this to deal like a judge (I mean like a good judge), to listen on one side of the cause and sleep on the other? I shall add but one word more: that this indecent sloth is very much owing to that luxury and excess men usually practise upon this day, by which half the service thereof is turned to sin, men dividing their time between God and their bellies, when after a gluttonous meal, their senses dozed and stupefied, they retire to God's house to sleep out the afternoon. Surely, brethren, these things ought not so to be.

"He that hath ears to hear let him hear." And God give us all grace to hear and receive his holy word to the salvation of our own souls!

# A LETTER

## TO A VERY YOUNG LADY ON HER MARRIAGE.

MADAM,—The hurry and impertinence of receiving and paying visits on account of your marriage being now over, you are beginning to enter into a course of life, where you will want much advice to divert you from falling into many errors, fopperies, and follies, to which your sex is subject. I have always borne an entire friendship to your father and mother; and the person they have chosen for your husband has been, for some years past, my particular favourite. I have long wished you might come together, because I hoped that, from the goodness of your disposition, and by following the counsel of wise friends, you might in time make yourself worthy of him. Your parents were so far in the right that they did not produce you much into the world, whereby you avoided many wrong steps which others have taken, and have fewer ill impressions to be removed; but they failed, as it is generally the case, in too much neglecting to cultivate your mind; without which it is impossible to acquire or preserve the friendship and esteem of a wise man, who soon grows weary of acting the lover, and treating his wife like a mistress, but wants a reasonable companion, and a true friend through every stage of his life. It must be therefore your business to qualify yourself for those offices; wherein I will not fail to be your director, as long as I shall think you deserve it, by letting you know how you are to act, and what you ought to avoid.

And beware of despising or neglecting my instructions, whereon will depend not only your making a good figure in

the world, but your own real happiness, as well as that of the person who ought to be the dearest to you.

I must therefore desire you, in the first place, to be very slow in changing the modest behavour of a virgin: it is usual in young wives, before they have been many weeks married, to assume a bold, forward look and manner of talking, as if they intended to signify in all companies that they were no longer girls, and consequently that their whole demeanour, before they got a husband, was all but a countenance and constraint upon their nature: whereas, I suppose, if the votes of wise men were gathered, a very great majority would be in favour of those ladies who, after they were entered into that state, rather chose to double their portion of modesty and reservedness.

I must likewise warn you strictly against the least degree of fondness to your husband before any witness whatsoever, even before your nearest relations, or the very maids of your chamber. This proceeding is so exceeding odious and disgustful to all who have either good breeding or good sense, that they assign two very unamiable reasons for it; the one is gross hypocrisy, and the other has too bad a name to mention. If there is any difference to be made, your husband is the lowest person in company either at home or abroad, and every gentleman present has a better claim to all marks of civility and distinction from you. Conceal your esteem and love in your own breast, and reserve your kind looks and language for private hours, which are so many in the four-and-twenty, that they will afford time to employ a passion as exalted as any that was ever described in a French romance.

Upon this head I would likewise advise you to differ in practice from those ladies who affect abundance of uneasiness while their husbands are abroad; start with every

knock at the door, and ring the bell incessantly for the servants to let in their master; will not eat a bit at dinner or supper if the husband happens to stay out; and receive him at his return with such a medley of chiding and kindness, and catechizing him where he has been, that a shrew from Bilingsgate would be a more easy and eligible companion.

Of the same leaven are those wives who, when their husbands are gone a journey, must have a letter every post, upon pain of fits and hysterics: and a day must be fixed for their return home, without the least allowance for business or sickness, or accidents, or weather; upon which I can only say, that in my observation, those ladies, who are apt to make the greatest clutter on such occasions, would liberally have paid a messenger for bringing them news, that their husbands had broken their necks on the road.

You will perhaps be offended, when I advise you to abate a little of that violent passion for fine clothes so predominant in your sex. It is a little hard that ours, for whose sake you wear them, are not admitted to be of your council. I may venture to assure you, that we will make an abatement at any time of four pounds a yard in a brocade, if the ladies will but allow a suitable addition of care in the cleanliness and sweetness of their persons. For the satirical part of mankind will needs believe, that it is not impossible to be very fine and very filthy; and that the capacities of a lady are sometimes apt to fall short, in cultivating cleanliness and finery together. I shall only add, upon so tender a subject, what a pleasant gentleman said concerning a silly woman of quality; that nothing could make her supportable but cutting off her head; for his ears were offended by her tongue, and his nose by her hair and teeth.

I am wholly at a loss how to advise you in the choice of

company, which, however, is a point of as great importance as any in your life. If your general acquaintance be among the ladies, who are your equals or superiors, provided they have nothing of what is commonly called an ill reputation, you think you are safe; and this, in the style of the world, will pass for good company. Whereas, I am afraid it will be hard for you to pick out one female acquaintance in this town from whom you will not be in manifest danger of contracting some foppery, affection, vanity, folly, or vice. Your only safe way of conversing with them is, by a firm resolution to proceed in your practice and behaviour directly contrary to whatever they shall say or do, and this I take to be a good general rule, with very few exceptions. For instance, in the doctrines they usually deliver to young married women for managing their husbands, their several accounts of their own conduct in that particular, to recommend it to your imitation, the reflections they make upon others of their sex for acting differently, their directions how to come off with victory upon any dispute or quarrel you may have with your husband, the arts by which you may discover and practise upon his weak side: when to work by flattery and insinuation, when to melt him with tears, and when to engage him with a high hand: in these and a thousand other cases it will be prudent to retain as many of their lectures in your memory as you can, and then determine to act in full opposition to them all.

I hope your husband will interpose his authority to limit you in the trade of visiting: half-a-dozen fools are, in all conscience, as many as you should require; and it will be sufficient for you to see them twice a-year, for I think the fashion does not exact that visits should be paid to friends.

I advise that your company at home should consist of men rather than women. To say the truth, I never yet

knew a tolerable woman to be fond of her own sex. I confess, when both are mixed and well-chosen, and put their best qualities forward, there may be an intercourse of civility and good-will, which, with the addition of some degree of sense, can make conversation or any amusement agreeable. But a knot of ladies, got together by themselves, is a very school of impertinence and detraction, and it is well if those be the worst.

Let your men acquaintance be of your husband's choice, and not recommended to you by any she companions, because they will certainly fix a coxcomb upon you, and it will cost you some time and pains before you can arrive at the knowledge of distinguishing such a one from a man of sense.

Never take a favourite waiting-maid into your cabinet council, to entertain you with histories of those ladies whom she has formerly served, of their diversions and their dresses, to insinuate how great a fortune you brought, and how little you are allowed to squander, to appeal to her from your husband, and to be determined by her judgment, because you are sure it will be always for you, to receive and discard servants by her approbation or dislike; to engage you by her insinuations in misunderstandings with your best friends: to represent all things in false colours, and to be the common emissary of scandal.

But the grand affair of your life will be to gain and preserve the friendship and esteem of your husband. You are married to a man of good education and learning, of an excellent understanding and an exact taste. It is true, and it is happy for you, that these qualities in him are adorned with great modesty, a most amiable sweetness of temper, and an unusual disposition to sobriety and virtue; but neither good nature nor virtue will suffer him to esteem

you against his judgment; and although he is not capable of using you ill, yet you will in time grow a thing indifferent, and perhaps contemptible, unless you can supply the loss of youth and beauty with more durable qualities. You have but a very few years to be young and handsome in the eyes of the world, and as few months to be so in the eyes of a husband who is not a fool; for I hope you do not still dream of charms and raptures, which marriage ever did, and ever will, put a sudden end to. Besides, yours was a match of prudence and common good-liking, without any mixture of that ridiculous passion which has no being but in play-books and romances.

You must, therefore, use all endeavours to attain to some degree of those accomplishments which your husband most values in other people, and for which he is most valued himself. You must improve your mind by closely pursuing such a method of study as I shall direct or approve of. You must get a collection of history and travels, which I will recommend to you, and spend some hours every day in reading them, and making extracts from them if your memory be weak. You must invite persons of knowledge and understanding to an acquaintance with you, by whose conversation you may learn to correct your taste and judgment; and when you can bring yourself to comprehend and relish the good sense of others, you will arrive in time to think rightly yourself, and to become a reasonable and agreeable companion. This must produce in your husband a true rational love and esteem for you, which old age will not diminish. He will have a regard for your judgment and opinion in matters of the greatest weight; you will be able to entertain each other without a third person to relieve you by finding discourse. The endowments of your mind will even make your person more agreeable to him;

and when you are alone, your time will not lie heavy upon your hands for want of some trifling amusement.

As little respect as I have for the generality of your sex, it has sometimes moved me with pity to see the lady of the house forced to withdraw immediately after dinner, and this in families where there is not much drinking; as if it were an established maxim, that women are incapable of all conversation. In a room where both sexes meet, if the men are discoursing upon any general subject, the ladies never think it their business to partake in what passes, but in a separate club entertain each other with the price and choice of lace and silk, and what dresses they liked or disapproved at the church or the playhouse. And when you are among yourselves, how naturally after the first compliments do you apply your hands to each other's lappets, and ruffles, and mantuas; as if the whole business of your lives and the public concern of the world depended upon the cut or colour of your dress. As divines say, that some people take more pains to be damned than it would cost them to be saved; so your sex employ more thought, memory, and application to be fools than would serve to make them wise and useful. When I reflect on this I cannot conceive you to be human creatures, but a certain sort of species hardly a degree above a monkey; who has more diverting tricks than any of you, is an animal less mischievous and expensive, might in time be a tolerable critic in velvet and brocade, and for aught I know, would equally become them.

I would have you look upon finery as a necessary folly, which all great ladies did whom I have ever known: I do not desire you to be out of the fashion, but to be the last and least in it. I expect that your dress shall be one degree lower than your fortune can afford; and in your own heart

I would wish you to be an utter contemner of all distinctions which a finer petticoat can give you; because it will neither make you richer, handsomer, younger, better natured, more virtuous or wise than if it hung upon a peg.

If you are in company with men of learning, though they happen to discourse of arts and sciences out of your compass, yet you will gather more advantage by listening to them than from all the nonsense and frippery of your own sex; but if they be men of breeding as well as learning, they will seldom engage in any conversation where you ought not to be a hearer, and in time have your part. If they talk of the manners and customs of the several kingdoms of Europe, of travels into remoter nations, of the state of your own country, or of the great men and actions of Greece and Rome; if they give their judgment upon English and French writers either in verse or prose, or of the nature and limits of virtue and vice; it is a shame for an English lady not to relish such discourses, not to improve by them, and endeavour by reading and information to have her share in those entertainments, rather than turn aside, as it is the usual custom, and consult with the woman who sits next her about a new cargo of fans.

It is a little hard that not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand should be brought to read or understand her own natural tongue, or to be judge of the easiest books that are written in it; as any one may find who can have the patience to hear them, when they are disposed to mangle a play or novel, where the least word out of the common road is sure to disconcert them; and it is no wonder, when they are not so much as taught to spell in their childhood, nor can ever attain to it in their whole lives. I advise you therefore to read aloud, more or less, every day to your husband, if he will permit you, or to any other friend (but

not a female one) who is able to set you right; and as for spelling, you may compass it in time by making collections from the books you read.

I know very well that those who are commonly called learned women have lost all manner of credit by their impertinent talkativeness and conceit of themselves; but there is an easy remedy for this, if you once consider, that after all the pains you may be at you never can arrive in point of learning to the perfection of a school-boy. The reading I would advise you to is only for improvement of your own good sense, which will never fail of being mended by discretion. It is a wrong method and ill choice of books that makes those learned ladies just so much the worse for what they have read, and therefore it shall be my care to direct you better, a task for which I take myself to be not ill-qualified, because I have spent more time and have had more opportunities than many others to observe and discover from what source the various follies of women are derived.

Pray, observe how insignificant things are the common race of ladies when they have passed their youth and beauty, how contemptible they appear to the men, and yet more contemptible to the younger part of their own sex, and have no relief, but in passing their afternoons in visits, where they are never acceptable, and their evenings at cards among each other, while the former part of the day is spent in spleen and envy, or in vain endeavours to repair by art and dress the ruins of time. Whereas I have known ladies at sixty, to whom all the polite part of the court and town paid their addresses, without any further view than that of enjoying the pleasure of their conversation.

I am ignorant of any one quality that is amiable in a man which is not equally so in a woman: I do not except even modesty and gentleness of nature. Nor do I know

one vice or folly which is not equally detestable in both. There is indeed one infirmity which is generally allowed you, I mean that of cowardice; yet there should seem to be something very capricious, that when women profess their admiration for a colonel or a captain, on account of his valour, they should fancy it a very graceful and becoming quality in themselves, to be afraid of their own shadows; to scream in a barge when the weather is calmest, or in a coach at a ring: to run from a cow at a hundred yards distance, to fall into fits at the sight of a spider, an earwig, or a frog. At least, if cowardice be a sign of cruelty (as it is generally granted), I can hardly think it an accomplishment so desirable as to be thought worth improving by affectation.

And as the same virtues equally become both sexes, so there is no quality whereby women endeavour to distinguish themselves from men for which they are not just so much the worst, except that only of reservedness; which, however, as you generally manage it, is nothing else but affectation or hypocrisy. For, as you cannot too much discountenance those of our sex who presume to take unbecoming liberties before you; so you ought to be wholly unconstrained in the company of deserving men, when you have had sufficient experience of their discretion.

There is never wanting in this town a tribe of bold, swaggering, rattling ladies, whose talents pass among coxcombs for wit and humour; their excellency lies in rude, shocking expressions, and what they call running a man down. If a gentleman in their company happens to have any blemish in his birth or person, if any misfortune has befallen his family or himself for which he is ashamed, they will be sure to give him broad hints of it without any provocation. I would recommend you to the acquaintance

of a common prostitute rather than to that of such termagants as these. I have often thought that no man is obliged to suppose such creatures to be women, but to treat them like insolent rascals disguised in female habits, who ought to be stripped and kicked downstairs.

I will add one thing, although it be a little out of place, which is to desire that you will learn to value and esteem your husband for those good qualities which he really possesses, and not to fancy others in him which he certainly has not. For, although this latter is generally understood to be a mark of love, yet it is indeed nothing but affectation or ill judgment. It is true, he wants so very few accomplishments, that you are in no great danger of erring on this side; but my caution is occasioned by a lady of your acquaintance, married to a very valuable person, whom yet she is so unfortunate as to be always commending for those perfections to which he can least pretend.

I can give you no advice upon the article of expense; only I think you ought to be well informed how much your husband's revenue amounts to, and be so good a computer as to keep within it in that part of the management which falls to your share; and not to put yourself in the number of those politic ladies, who think they gain a great point when they have teased their husbands to buy them a new equipage, a laced head, or a fine petticoat, without once considering what long score remained unpaid to the butcher.

I desire you will keep this letter in your cabinet, and often examine impartially your whole conduct by it: and so God bless you, and make you a fair example to your sex, and a perpetual comfort to your husband and your parents.

I am, with great truth and affection, Madam, your most faithful friend and humble servant.

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